Monday, December 12, 2011 ★★ 14 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 4 P18 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ OR BREAKING to 4467 INQUIRER 990AM

SPORTS **Viloria** stops Segura, keeps crown / A29

WORLD **Anti-Putin** protests spread across Russia / A27

BUSINESS **Gov't** debt burden swells to P4.87T / B1

ACROSS **Chinese** ship loaded with black sand sinks / A17

LEARNING **Training** a five-star cast for tourism / I1

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

BOXER Brian Viloria of the Philippines raises his hand in victory after stopping Giovanni Segura of Mexico.

Wish of farmers: Return coco levy

By Dolly Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—Coconut farmers have one wish this Christmas: For President Aquino, his uncle Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco and the Supreme Court to play Santa Claus and return billions of pesos in coconut levy fund.

CHRISTMAS A22

Sorsogon general new military chief

Former Cory aide-de-camp replaces Oban

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Christine O. Avendaño

MAJ. GEN. Jessie D. Dellosa, a former aide-de-camp to the late former President Corazon Aquino, has been named chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, replacing Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr., who retires tomorrow at the age of 56, three Cabinet officials and two senior military officers disclosed yesterday.

It was Dellosa who implemented "Oplan Daybreak" that led to the rescue of American missionary Gracia Burnham and the killing of Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Sabaya nine years ago in Mindanao.

President Aquino is expected to announce today the appointment of Dellosa, the head of the Northern Luzon (Melcom) Command, to the top AFP post when the Commander in Chief addresses the troops during turnover rites at the AFP general headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

Both Dellosa, who was born in Bacon, Sorsogon, and Oban, who is also from Sorsogon, belong to the Philippine Military Academy (PMA)

SORSOGON A21

ESCAPE STORY American Kevin Lunsmann (his face intentionally blurred as he is a minor) narrates to soldiers in Zamboanga City his escape from Abu Sayyaf kidnappers in Basilan.

US teener escaped as Abus slept

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A 14-year-old American who escaped from Abu Sayyaf bandits after five months in captivity wandered without shoes for two days in the jungle, surviving on candies and coconut juice, before villagers found him, officials said on Sunday.

Kevin Eric Lunsmann made his getaway while his kidnappers were sleeping, Mayor Celso Lobregat told reporters.

Exhausted, hungry and still stunned, Lunsmann initially fled from the villagers, said Senior Supt. Edwin de Ocampo, the Zamboanga City police chief.

"He was in fear so there was a bit of a chase before the villagers convinced him that they were friends," De Ocampo told The Associated Press. He said the teenager was fine but exhausted and had bruises on his

US TEENER A20

Crash underscores need for open space around Naia

By Mike Hamlin and Nika Calleja

THE PLANE crash that left 13 people dead on Saturday in Pandacan City highlighted once again the need for open spaces and clearings around the country's main airport, according to the Civil Aeronautics Administration of the Philippines (CAAP).

In a phone interview, CAAP Director General Reynaldo Gutierrez yesterday said the crowded area around Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) was among the reasons cited by international regulators to downgrade the Philippines' rating in 2008.

"We cannot improve our category rating because we lack the land area specified in the international standards," Gutierrez said. "That's why if you noticed, major airports in other countries are located in

CRASH A20

The President's bullying of the Supreme Court

By Amando Doronila

AFTER a week of scathing attacks on the Supreme Court by President Aquino, it's a good time to pause and assess the extent of the damage left by the bullying assaults on the institutional balance of power between the presidency and the high court.

In the attacks on Chief Justice Renato Corona at the Pine National Criminal Justice Summit on Dec. 5 and at the Makati Business Club anniversary celebration on Dec. 1, the nation witnessed the fiercest confrontation yet between the presidency and the judiciary in the political sector since the founding of the republic.

ANALYSIS

It is a confrontation that has escalated into a hate campaign fueled by the presidency in the guise of thwarting a holy crusade to make Arroyo administration officials accountable for offenses of electoral rigging in 2004 and 2007, at least six cases of graft and corruption, plunder and abuse of power.

This goal of transparency in government and the principle of accountability appear to have broad public support (if we go by public opinion surveys).

The big issue that cannot be downgraded is how accountability is to be achieved, that is, whether it

THE PRESIDENT'S A20

TRAFFIC RELIEF Ramiro Hinojos, a traffic enforcer wearing a Santa Claus costume, dances on the job along a congested road in Manila. Popularly known as the "dancing traffic cop," Hinojos, 35, is one of thousands of traffic enforcers who struggle daily to keep Manila's notorious road traffic moving despite insults from some impatient motorists and health dangers posed by pollution.

Santa Claus lifts mood in horrific traffic

By Christine O. Avendaño

NOT EVEN President Aquino is spared from the horrendous pre-Christmas traffic jams. He is "just as affected" as anyone else by the snail-paced holiday traffic, Malacañang says.

Interviewed over state radio dzRB, the presidential spokesperson, Edwin Lacierda, yesterday said road traffic had indeed become horrific given the number of

SANTA | A20

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Occasional Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Occasional Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Aparri	Occasional Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Ozamiz - Dipolog	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Cotabato	Partly Cloudy
Legaspi	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga del Sur	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	General Santos	Partly Cloudy

PCSO
27 5 23 9 7 31
SUERTRES
6 1 7 7 9 8
0 7 5
SUPER LOTTO 6/49
8 18 21 34 42 48
P40,230,496.80
LOTTO 7PM Next DRAW LOTTO, result for 6/49, 7PM draw

Hasty vote will kill RH bill–Enrile

By Cathy Yamsuan and Jerome Aning

SENATE President Juan Ponce Enrile yesterday warned Sen. Pia Cayetano, principal sponsor of the reproductive health (RH) bill in the upper chamber, that "the will lose" if she insisted on a plenary decision to end the period of debate so the controversial measure could be quickly put to a vote.

Enrile noted that many senators still wanted to ask questions about the bill. He pointed out that the debate had dished from simple queries about the side effects of contraceptives to deep-and more serious-concerns, such as the implications of a controlled population on economic development.

Reports said Cayetano planned to file a motion seeking an end to the period of debate or interpellations so the Senate could move to the period of amendment and, finally, a vote.

Enrile, however, thinks Cayetano may be taking a wrong turn.

"If [Cayetano] files a motion to close the period of interpellation, baka marala siya [she may face defeat]. If she makes an oral motion, she will lose. While I will accept and submit her motion to the floor for a vote, in my view, that motion is likely to lose," Enrile said in an interview.

As it was, the Senate President said, "at least 20" members were prepared to vote against the bill bill should Cayetano force the issue, noting that the numbers could be decisive in killing the bill.

Of the "six or seven" others still undecided, Enrile said, "two or three" could be persuaded to vote with those against the measure.

"These are just my personal observations," said Enrile, who chose not to name fellow senators who were likely to vote "nay."

Simple majority

A simple majority of those present in a session would be enough to decide the fate of the RH bill, the Senate President said. For example, in a quorum of 19 senators, 10 votes would suffice to overturn the measure, he added.

Cayetano suggested last week that Senate leaders were reluctant to tackle the RH bill after the chamber approved the 2012 national budget in record time.

The RH bill seeks to define the government's policy on reproductive health and involves an endorsement of artificial methods of contraception to aid parents to determine the number of children in their families.

While supporters praise the advantages offered by the measure, especially to women from economically and educationally disadvantaged sectors, those who opposed it argue that the RH bill would promote promiscuity and give global lobbyists a say in determining the size of the country's population.

Enrile and Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, in various instances, explained that many questions about the RH were still left unanswered.

Issues other than health

The Senate President echoed fears that the Philippines might replicate the experience of other countries where the diminishing number of younger people could not support an aging population.

"That's why we need to examine the effects of this bill on our security and economy. If farmers and other poor people are being targeted so they would not have so many children, who would take over the farms? You see, this can be a pro-elitist bill. Why, is it only the wealthy people who have the right to bear children," Enrile asked.

"This bill is too important to rush. Why can't the next congress deliberate on this? You are dealing with the population of a country, not just the health of the women involved," he added.

Earlier, Sen. Pacifilo Lacson warned that the country's dwindling natural resources would prove inadequate in providing for a continuously growing population.

Pro-lifers claim victory

Pro-life groups yesterday said they regarded as a "victory" the announcement by leaders of Congress that the RH bill would not be passed before the end of the year.

"The message is out: are victorious already in the fight against the RH bill and we are now confident that the Senate president—for the upper and lower houses [of Congress]. The passage of the bill is supposed to end the year, let the people know that we are victorious in our own. But the battle continues in rage," Pro-Life Philippines Foundation president Eric Manalang told reporters.

Pro-life groups from various parts of the country staged a prayer rally at Rizal Park yesterday as they ended their National Marian Pilgrimage for Life that began on Dec. 5.

The rally rebirth had the theme, "Save the World Through Divine Power," broke the Catholic Church Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' opposition to the RH bill and same-sex unions.

Manalang also rallied on President Aquino not to put pressure on congressmen to approve the bill. "This kind of pressure is unedified. So: The will of the people should be followed. Let us not force this. The problems [in our country] is poverty and corruption. That is what the government should be spending for," he said.

My Toshiba Christmas

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December 03, 2011 at The Plaza, Resorts World Manila, 11:00 - 12:00 pm

Palace: Protesters merely aping Occupy Wall Street movement

MAKATI CITY – Malacañang thinks they are just copycats.

A Palace official yesterday said the government had been relevant of the militant groups that had travelled halfway to occupy Mendiola in an effort to imitate the Occupy protests in the United States and other parts of the world.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said the groups were merely creating trouble and provoking the police, who had "exercised a wide levels of tolerance" for them the past week.

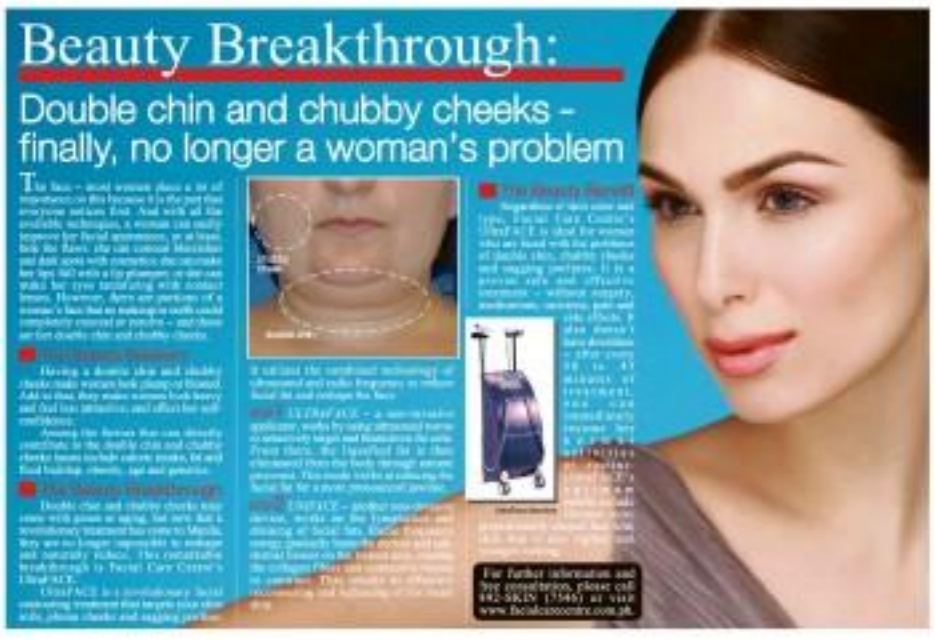
Over government radio dzRB, Lacierda said a number of policemen were hurt during the dispersal of the protesters.

A number of protesters were hurt, too, as gleaned from reports and television footage.

"Ultimately, they are raising issues that are not what the Occupy Wall Street protesters (are pushing for). They are trying to ape Occupy Wall Street [for] using the same line, the same slogan," he said.

The Occupy Wall Street movement in New York was started by young people in protest of the greed of major banks and multinational corporations. They identify with the 99 percent of the common people versus the one percent that control the wealth in the US.

Lacierda stressed the government will "protect our citizenry." Christine D. Avendaño



Solons: Stop saving drug mules

TWO LAWMAKERS have urged the government to stop frantically trying to save convicted drug mules from executions abroad but rather to spend the pay money on more worthy causes.

Makati Rep. Jejomar Binay Jr. and Senator Francisco said that while it was reasonable to express the government to help a Filipino suspended of crimes abroad during the trial stage, it should stop intervening once he or she was convicted.

"Once they are found guilty beyond reasonable doubt, the government should stop intervening in their behalf at the expense of law-abiding Filipino taxpayers," said Santiago.

Plain lazy

Iloilo Rep. Jerry Trefias, chair of the House committee on good government and public accountability, said the convicted do not deserve public compassion as they willingly chose to do what they did because they were "lazy" and wanted to get rich quickly.

Trefias cited as an example the unnamed 35-year-old Filipino executed on Dec. 8 in China for smuggling in 1.8 kilos of heroin from Malaysia three years ago.

"He had been involved in this illegal activity for quite some time before Chinese authorities caught up with him. According to reports, he used to be a security guard in China but decided to resign from his job and become a full-time drug mule for the obvious reason that he did not want to work hard to earn a living," said Trefias.

'Parasite'

He said Bar Prime Minister Jejomar Binay signified the government's propensity to go all-out in trying to rescue Filipino drug mules from the ultimate penalty as he had been vocal in seeking their reprieve.

Binay even asked the Chinese court to grant a reprieve to the recently condemned Filipina as a "gesture" to Filipinos, which has abandoned the death penalty.

Lawmakers said the government should realize that the drug mules "bring no money but shame and a dark future for the millions of victims of the drugs that they distribute."

He found it lamentable that Filipino drug traffickers were being pictured as "victims rather than criminals." Ellr Cabuenyos

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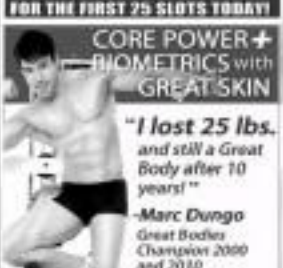

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Solon shot 3 times

A MEMBER of Congress was shot and wounded by at least two men yesterday in a subdivision in Marikina City, police said.

Ronaldo Cesario, representative of the party-list group Bahaan (Bagani Ating mga Iniskalahang ni Pedring Sinlaf, which helps rescue people who have been accused of a crime and jailed), was rushed to St. Matthew's hospital in San Mateo, Rizal, after he was shot thrice.

Cesario, 63, is vice chair of the House committee on poverty alleviation.

Senior Supt. Gabriel Lopez, Marikina police chief, said the lawmaker, who joined a fiesta celebration, Barangay Concepcion Uno, Marikina City at around 5 p.m. Cesario was shot in the back, back and leg.

"We still don't know anything about his present condition, if he is critical or not," Lopez said.

Cesario was reportedly transferred to St. Luke's Medical Center and would undergo surgery for his wounds.

Police have yet to establish a motive and obtain more details of the attack.

Nika Colleso

Return big bonuses, gov't firm execs told

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COMMISSION on Audit (COA) has questioned the unauthorized allowances and other benefits amounting to P165.05-million that officials and employees of the Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) received in 2010, saying these appeared to be grossly excessive and without legal basis.

One of the benefits that caught the COA attention was the P50-percent supervision pay for every hour of service of employees, and the arbitrary method of determining terminal leave credits for the PNCC Retirement Trust Fund and members of the PNCC Board.

Terminal leave credits were not based on actual vacation and sick leave credit days but on estimates given by management.

COA said these were "without legal basis and are grossly excessive and injudicious," based on a COA circular, particularly because from 2003 to 2006 the corporation had incurred losses.

It also had similar comments on the gratuity benefits that PNCC officials received in addition to the retirement benefits. The gratuity benefits were sourced from the pool of earnings from operations, NLEX revenue shares, retirement shares from the SLEX Joint Venture Agreement, and dividends from other subsidiaries and affiliates.

The COA also said board members of the PNCC Retirement Trust Fund who also belonged to the PNCC board collected P12.4334 million worth of allowances and benefits not mentioned by the Department of Budget and Management.

It noted that members of the board were not salaried officials and are not entitled to certain benefits. The benefits they received without authority were incentive and performance bonuses, monthly allowances, mid-year bonuses, Christmas bonuses, anniversary bonuses, rice subsidies and productivity enhancement incentives.

COA said that while every corporation had the power to establish pension, retirement and other plans for its officers and employees, this was not absolute.

The COA wants PNCC officials to return the excessive amounts they received and to stop their irregular benefits system.

But the PNCC officials who received the benefits said they received them in good faith and cited provisions of the Labor Code, the Government Accounting and Auditing Manual and recent rulings to underline cases that prohibit deductions from salaries, suspensions or reimbursement pay or refund of what had already been received.

The PNCC said the basis for granting the retirement benefits was the PNCC's bylaws and the Corporation Code, which states that corporate powers lie with the board of directors. The benefits were covered by various board resolutions.

It said that while the government was majority owner of PNCC, the latter still retained its private character as a government-acquired asset corporation.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

DECEMBER 12 (Monday)
Psalter: Week 2
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Is 25:6-8 (Isaiah 4); Ps. 23:1-6
Reach me your name, O Lord.

1st Reading: Num 24:2-7, 15-17a

Balaam looked up and saw Israel camping, tribe by tribe; and the spirit of God came upon him and he uttered his song:

"Word of Balaam, son of Beor, the say, the say who hears the words of God, and beholds the vision of the Almighty, in ecstasy with eyes unveiled:

How goodly are your tents, Jacob, your tabernacles, Israel! Like valleys outstretched, like gardens beside a stream, like aloes planted by Yahweh, like cedars beside the waters.

His buckets are overflowing and his seeds are always watered. His king becomes stronger than Agag, and his kingdom grows.

Then Balaam pronounced his oracle: "Word of Balaam, son of Beor, the say, the one who hears the words of God, who has knowledge from the Most High, and who receives the vision of the Almighty, in ecstasy with eyes unveiled.

I see a figure, but not really. I behold him, but not near. A star shall come forth from Jacob, he rise with a staff in his hand. He shatters the foreheads of Moab and tears down all the sons of Sheth.

Gospel: Mk 23:44-37

Jesus had entered the Temple and was teaching when the chief priests, the teachers of the Law and the Jewish authorities came to him and asked, "What authority have you to act like this? Who gave you authority to do all this?"

Jesus answered them, "I will also ask you a question, only one. Reply if you give me an answer, then I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was John the prophet's baptism from a mere man or was it merely something human, by means of the people, since all hold John up as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know."

And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what right I do these things."

Reflection:

The third week of advent, Jesus shows us the way. In today's gospel, Jesus displayed great confidence in himself and the work that he does. There are times we are not sure with ourselves but we have to be convinced that if we do the right things with joy, we are sure to go wrong. Christ is the source of our confidence.

Christmas furlough for Arroyo up to court, not us, says Palace

By Christine O. Avendaño and Gil Cabacungan

BIRCAÑOSO said yesterday it was leaving up to the courts the matter of a Christmas furlough for former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as well as her possible transfer to a regular jail.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said the Pasay City Regional Trial Court judge handling the election sabotage case against Arroyo would be the one to make those decisions.

"In equity, we are hands off here... It's really based on the discretion of the court," Lacierda said in an interview over radio dzBB.

Lacierda declined to comment on Arroyo's request to be allowed to go home for Christmas.

He said it should be the Commission on Human Security, which filed the election sabotage case against the former President, that would a comment on the matter instead.

"The (Comelec) will be whatever short opinion they have before the court, so let's wait," Lacierda said.

Lacierda also shrugged off allegations the Palace had inflicted mental torture on Arroyo, who is currently Pampanga representative in Congress, in to relocating pre-trial incharge her.

"How is the feeling termed mentally? We are going to enact accountability. I don't know if that's mental torture," he said.

"If she's feeling any pressure, it's because she has not lived up to the expectations of her as chief executive of the land," Lacierda said.

The Arroyo camp charged yesterday that the detention of the former President was "burdening on political persecution" rather than criminal prosecution.

Deputy Minority Leader Rozzle Biazon said Malacañang's refusal to provide the steps such minimal accommodations befitting a member of Congress showed that it was intent on shaming her rather than seeking resolution of the cases against her.

Arroyo's lawyer, Ferdinand Topacio, also complained that she was not allowed to hear a Catholic Mass in the hospital compound yesterday.

Topacio said they made a request with the Philippine National Police for Arroyo to be allowed to leave her hospital suite to attend the religious service but it was not acted upon by Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo.

"The chapel is walking distance from her room but Secretary Robredo did not approve the request last Friday," Topacio said, adding that Robredo told them to get permission from the court.

The minority bloc in the House has formalized its appeal to give Arroyo some leeway in her hospital arrest.

In a letter to Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr., House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman said that Arroyo had been rendered "incommunicado" after being disallowed access to a cell phone, laptop, computer and radio.

Lagman asked Belmonte to intervene to give Arroyo access to communication and electronic facilities.

Critics of Arroyo, on the other hand, slammed the government for giving her special treatment. "She should be treated like any other detainee and jailed in a regular prison," said Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño.

On the third day of her detention at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City, hospital officials said Arroyo had no complaints yet regarding her medical condition.

"She's OK, she has no complaints," the officials told Inquirer.net on condition of anonymity.

According to VMMC director Dr. Nita Lagasca, "we will only release the result of the examination conducted by our doctors on Arroyo under a court subpoena," which reports from Cynthia D. Balloon, Aurea C. Carreon and Jaymar T. Ilomo!

DAR to honor public's right to information, documents

THE PUBLIC'S right to information and access to official documents will be honored by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and all its offices.

This is in line with the order of Secretary Ed de los Reyes for an effective and transparent disposition of land cases.

In Memorandum Circular No. 7, De los Reyes said "the right to information and access to official documents (is!) states is integral to the basic rights of farmers, farm workers and tenants."

The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reform Law (CARPER) affirmed the farmers' legal standing as real parties in interest in cases involving the land they till.

In view of this, De los Reyes said it was but proper that "they are properly informed on all matters relevant to those cases and allowed access to all pertinent documents."

He defined "information" as "any data or material in any form, including records, documents, instruments, opinions, advisory, press releases, circulars, orders, logbooks, glossings and papers, as well as data material held in any electronic form."

He noted that, in some cases, we upholding farmers on the status of their cases resolved in "undue elaboration" or ejection because the CARP was unable to intervene in the farmers' behalf.

But he stressed that the right to information was not absolute. Certain documents, he said, may not be made available to the public.

Zonta Alabang sets Christmas bazaar

FOR THE fourth year, the Zonta Club of Alabang will stream Christmas Carnivale Bazaar featuring gift shops, sports contests and entertainment for the family at Corteva Court, Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City, on Dec. 17 and 18, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

A Mom's Lounge for dads will sell everything from flashlights to electronic gadgets with Mobile 1 (Beyond Gadgets) holding its yearend sale at the bazaar. EMG Chevrolet and Nissan will display their latest models, while Supermarket will spotlight the Chartered Bank boat.

Art auction, there is the Guadalupe of Fashion featuring high-end clothes and accessories. Chatterbox should please bargain hunters while The Home Front will feature items for the home.

Santa and Mrs. Claus will welcome children to Little Treasures where everything a child may want could be found.

Noodles can munch on Crustacean's Donuts which will sell glazed buns, Bratwurst, empanada, dips and treats for the mobs for some spread. Bakers Row will feature breads, cakes and pastries.

For fitness enthusiasts

Health buffs can go to The Family Fitness Zone for sports gear, supplements and energy drinks.

Dog lovers may have their pets join the My Dog's a Star contest, dressing them in costumes with the winners announced at 3 p.m. on both days.

On Dec. 17, the Carnivale Idols' 08 Ultimate Fridays Open will pit high school students Emil Riviera, De La Salle Zobel, Claire, Maria, Southridge and Xavier against each other. In the afternoon The Creative Kids Studio will present a Christmas Puppet Show.

Moving meditation

Master Zips will feature the art of tripping, a physical workout and a "moving meditation" that makes use of aerodynamic, weighted multicolored ribbons known as zips.

Saturday will end with Carnivale Rock Star spotlighting amateur bands.

On Sunday, the Carnival Fun Run and Walk will involve the whole family in a race under using a bike, skateboard, tricycle, skates or anything with wheels. The Ultimate Frisbee Dog Tournament this time will be open to all dogs and both male and female participants.

Yuletide music

Classical music and Christmas tunes will be provided by the Manila Winds Quintet. Yuletide Sparkle will feature the Dream girls, Banana Buchels and Judith Basul under the direction of Tres Hidayat.

Sponsors are Metrobank, Caterpillar, Globe and 96.3 Easy rock.

The proceeds from the Carnivale will help support the Zonta Club of Alabang's ongoing projects. More information may be had at zontaalabang2011@gmail.com and the ZCA webpage, www.zcalabang.org.

Ex-justice official dies in New York

LAWYER Antonio "Al" Manalang Quirino of Iloilo, Iloilo, and San Lorenzo Village, Makati City, died on Nov. 20 in New York City after a long battle with cancer. He was 56.

Quirino was chief prosecutor for the City of Pasig and served as senior undersecretary of justice in the Estrada administration.

He was born in Iloilo on March 24, 1955, the fifth of six siblings. He obtained his law degree at the Ateneo de Manila University graduating among the top of his class. He joined the Bench law firm where he rose to the position of litigation partner. He was a member of the New York State Bar Association.

Quirino also taught law at the Ateneo and Assumption College. He was also engaged in private practice. He was an avid golfer.

Private services were held on Nov. 23 at the Church of Our Savior, 59 Park Ave., NYC. In the Philippines, a memorial is being planned for Jan. 12. Interment at Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati, will follow.

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New Manila archbishop takes 'seat of leadership' today

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Archbishop Luis Antonio Tagle formally takes possession of the archdiocese during solemn installation rites at the Manila Cathedral today.

Fr. Reginald Malicdem, private secretary of outgoing Archbishop Ernesto Cardinal Rondon, said Tagle's installation at 9 a.m. will be preceded by a "Synakel" – dance procession that will start at San Agustin Church. The procession will be joined by more than 2,000 priests, religious men and women, and lay faithful from Tagle's previous diocese of Imus.

"This is the symbolic accompanying of the Cardinal of Archbishop Tagle," Malicdem told reporters in a press briefing. The Synakel participants will pass by the Intramuros Archbishop's Residence where Tagle is set to join them and after proceeding to the cathedral.

In front of the cathedral, there will be a civic reception by the mayors of the five cities covered by the archdiocese—Manila, Pasay, Makati, Mandaluyong and San Juan. The mayors, Malicdem said, will hand over to Tagle the symbolic keys to their cities "signifying the acceptance and collaboration of Church and civic authorities in the promotion of the common good and the presence of peace and justice."

Tagle will then enter the doors of the cathedral, where two auxiliary bishops and the archbishop's vicar will escort him through rites of liturgical reception before the actual canonical installation begins.

Tagle, 54, is the

TAGLE

Chief archbishop of Manila, now ordered the principal see of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines. He is also the fourth Filipino archbishop, the first Manila archbishop to be named by Pope Benedict XVI, and the youngest archbishop of Manila since 46th-born Michael James O'Doherty, who was only 42 when he was appointed in 1916.

Pope's letter

Cardinal Ernesto Rondon, the previous administrator of the Archdiocese of Manila, will begin the formal turnover with a celebration of the Eucharist, greeting the people gathered for the occasion. The Pope's letter appointing Tagle the new archbishop will be

shown and read, said Fr. Carmelo Arada, also of the Episcopal affairs ministry.

Tagle will then be led to the "cathedra" or his chair, Arada explained, adding, "While he is from of the liturgy in the Second Vatican Council, the unification of the bishop has come to signify his seat of leadership, no longer a throne."

The archbishop will then be greeted by members of the clergy, religious men and women, the faithful, and representatives of civil authority.

Respect and obedience

"This signifies the respect and obedience the people of God ought to render the chief shepherd of the archdiocese," Arada said.

The new archbishop will then preside over the celebration of the Eucharist, he said.

"The culmination of the celebration is his [presiding] over the Eucharistic celebration for it is here that the office of bishop as teacher, sanctifier and pastor of his Church shines forth most clearly in a liturgy that he celebrates with his people," Arada said.

The installation ceremonies will be streamed live on the Internet on two websites (http://www.cbcpnet.com and http://www.quipo-manila.net).

The Pope accepted Rondon' resignation and appointed Tagle as his successor on Dec. 15.

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tagle's installation coincides with the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the same day he was ordained a bishop by Rondon' predecessor, the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, 30 years ago.

Born on Jan. 21, 1957, Tagle was ordained to the priesthood on Feb. 27, 1982 at the age of 25. On Dec. 22, 2001, he was named bishop of Imus, which covers Cavite province.

Tagle took his philosophy and theology studies at San Jose Major Seminary in the Archdiocese de Manila University in Quezon City. He earned his doctorate in Sacred Theology at the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., where he studied from 1985 to 1992.

Dr. Ian Linn, a member of the International Theological Commission of the Vatican since 1997, and not as an expert at the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Asia in Rome.

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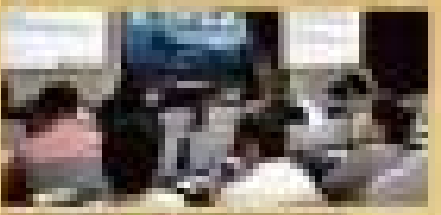


What is the status of competition law and policy in the Philippines?

"While the country already has a number of anti-trust laws and regulations in place, they are inadequate and ineffective in dealing with the increasing complexity of the modern anti-competitive behavior is observed in some industries, compromising consumer interests and resulting in exit markets. The perceived failure of government to control this social behavior has been attributed, in part, to the absence of a comprehensive competition or antitrust legislation."

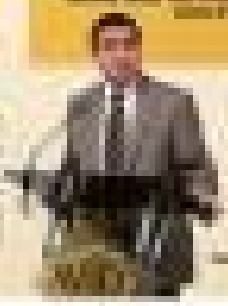
How does competition policy differ from competition law?

"Competition policy broadly refers to all laws, government policies, and regulations aimed at establishing competition and maintaining the same. It includes measures directed to promote, enhance, and create competitive market conditions by the removal of rivalry, as well as to redress anti-competitive results of public and private restrictive practices.

Competition law refers to the framework of rules and regulations designed to foster the competitive environment in a national economy. It consists of measures intended to promote a more competitive environment as well as enactments designed to prevent a reduction in competition."

Message from the President

SPEAKERS



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Revolving door

PRESIDENT AQUINO is set to appoint this week a new chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. My third in just a year and a half. The previous two served as AFP chief of staff for less than a year.

Reportedly leading a short list of candidates for the 43rd chief of staff are Lt. Gen. Anthony Alcaseran, AFP deputy chief of staff; Lt. Gen. Jessie Dellosa, chief of the Northern Luzon Command; and Vice Adm. Alexander Pama, flag officer in command of the Philippine Navy. The three are all members of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1979 that also count AFP chief of staff, Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr., and recently retired Army Chief Lt. Gen. Victor Ortiz among its members. Since both Alcaseran and Dellosa will reach 56, the mandatory retirement age, in 2013, either of them, if appointed, will serve two years, a slight relief from the revolving-door practice that has been alternating in the past several years.

In last 10 years as president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had 11 AFP chiefs. Of that number, one served for less than two months, six for less than a year, and four a little over a year. The quick succession of chiefs of staff under the former administration owed to compulsory retirement laws that provide a legal fig leaf to the incumbent power's self-serving design to ingratiate itself with the military establishment. The officer corps became hostage to the administration and they scrambled for positions and favor; loyalty was fostered in the appointing power, not in the Constitution. The result is the worst politicization of the military since Ferdinand Marcos' martial law and along with it, the further corruption of the AFP.

It has long been proposed for the AFP chief of staff to have a fixed term of three years, to shield the position from politicking and allow the holder to make reformist work in the military. That proposal nearly became a law in 2006 when a bicameral conference committee approved such a measure which, however, was not signed into law by Arroyo.

It now appears her successor is more open to the proposal. A bill inviting the measure has been filed in the House of Representatives by Rep. Rodolfo Biazon, of Muntinlupa, the former senator and himself a retired AFP chief of staff. A counterpart measure has been filed in the Senate by Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago.

Biazon's bill argues that a fixed term of three years would allow the chief of staff "adequate time to plan, test and execute measures to best achieve a desired end." In his explanatory note, Biazon laments that while the term of the chief of staff is limited by the Constitution to three years, it "is even shortened by extraordinary occurrences" like "death or resignation," or by "elements of the President's choosing to fill in vacancies. On the AFP's side, service officers whose dates of retirement draw near and provides the perception on the President's action as being politically driven." Since the AFP chief of staff is "critical to the country's interest," the lawmaker explains, "it is perhaps only proper that the person chosen to serve in such a capacity be the best qualified and not necessarily among the most senior, and should be able to enjoy a period of service that will allow him/her to implement programs and policies and thus deliver on the objectives of the AFP."

To be sure, a fixed term for the chief of staff is just one element in making the AFP work as a professional institution. There's a need, for example, to cultivate a culture of strategic planning in the AFP, especially since a non-apparent to have also acquired a revolving-door mentality in defense thinking. The AFP modernization plan crafted in the early 1990s is in the doldrums. Back when the Chinese were starting to put up their facilities in the Spratlys, Bert Bandicota and big camps in Metro Manila were sold to commercial developers to raise money for the modernization plan. Twenty years later, the former camps have become modern commercial and business hubs, the Chinese have strengthened their position in the Spratlys, and all that the AFP can show for its ambitious modernization program is a trail of corruption cases involving logistics and procurement. Meanwhile, all that our defense planners could do about the Chinese encroachment is to announce the fourth Close Air to the West Philippine Sea.

Come to think of it, the communist insurgency and Muslim-Mindanao secessionism are already 40 years old, with no signs of abating. The AFP and the police have always demanded a bigger budget and more resources to defeat the insurgents and the secessionists. But they have nothing to show despite getting what they wanted as national coalition continues to ruin the nations.

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Encourage factories to make only safe firecrackers

IT IS again that time of the year when policemen sweep down on stores selling firecrackers. It is to prevent people from buying the fireworks and starting themselves before and during New Year's Eve. But strangely and mysteriously, these firecrackers end up in the market and are bought on the day by foolish revelers.

Why, what's happening? How did these banned firecrackers get to the market? Ah, the policemen who seized them and they would simply chase them around them. And when they destroyed the firecrackers, nothing was left. So there is no evidence that they were really destroyed. Maybe some others, but they could be blown-out matches.

But we think the policemen's word for it. After all, it is dangerous to store firecrackers in one place. It is like keeping a time bomb: One careless spark and the whole shebang can explode. That is why, from time to time, and especially at this time of the year, a house or a warehouse where firecrackers are stored to be sold (say), explodes and goes up in flames.

But what are these rumors that the policemen themselves sell the firecrackers in the black market? Why not these be simply friendly tips exploding some New Year's Eve despite the ends? Where do the firecrackers come from?

The answer of our law enforcers is that they must have come from those that have escaped the raids. And again, we have to take their word for it because there is no proof that they really sold those firecrackers in the black market.

Which leads us to the next question. Why do they make the raids after the firecrackers are finished and are already being sold? Wouldn't it be better if they and the factories and resize the illegal ones so here while they can still bring manufactured? That way, no firecrackers will reach the market.

What's the thing is is that raiding the stores and not the factories is an exercise in futility. The factories will just make more of the same to replace those that were confiscated.

The key to stopping the massacre that takes place every New Year's Eve is the local government units. They are the ones in the center and

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

can monitor the factories constantly. Infrequent visits are not enough. When the inspectors leave, the factories will just resume making the banned firecrackers. Because there is a big demand for them in the Philippines so New Year's Eve happens here.

To Filipinos, New Year's Eve is not New Year's Eve without fireworks. It is not the same without the noise. And hanging pots and pans does not create the same noise that firecrackers make. They cannot be hung. On store the merchant. And that bigger the bang the better. After all, it happens only once a year.

But you need only one carelessly lit firecracker to lose a finger, a hand, a foot, an eye, or even your life. Then the merrymaking turns into a tragedy.

And this happens not only occasionally. It becomes an epidemic on New Year's Eve. Hospitals call their full medical staff to be on duty on New Year's Eve and after, as casualties are taken to the hospitals as if there is a battle going on. In fact, urban centers really look like a battlefield with fire, smoke, blasting, and the smell of gunpowder in the air and the debris of New Year's Eve now trunking litter the ground.

But after the casualties are counted and the dead are buried and public officials get tired wringing their hands and issuing public announcements to implement enforcement to stop the unruly mayhem, nothing is done. Everything is forgotten like cried flowers until the same madness is repeated at the end of the year.

The casualty count will not diminish unless the business making the consumer bombs they call firecrackers stop, or are forced to stop making them. There is a sort of a win-win among the factory owners, with cash one trying to make more powerful firecrackers than his own the other manufacturers are producing. There is one benefit for the bigger the bang the more it sells.

There is now a firecracker as big as a bowling ball that can flatten a small house, not to say with the people in it. You don't need a revenue bomb to announce imminent foreclosure. You just have to buy one of these bowling ball sized firecrackers.

And you can bet it—even if it is illegal—if you have the money and the right connections.

And there's the rub. All these powerful firecrackers that can maim and kill are illegal, but the firecracker factories have nothing from despite the raids, because people buy firecrackers.

Warning the people against these murderous pieces of metal and publishing pictures of mangled limbs after New Year's Eve do not have any effect on foolish Filipino who believes they must have firecrackers, otherwise New Year's Eve won't be complete.

In some local government units have taken to having fireworks displays in some plazas and other public places so people can go there and watch the fireworks—and save lots of money at the same time. All these fireworks going up in smoke and hundreds of millions of pesos that could have bought food, clothes and a lot of other things instead. But Filipinos will gladly forego food and clothes to be able to buy firecrackers.

What I'm driving at is that you cannot stop Filipinos from buying and exploding—and, perhaps, losing a finger or two—firecrackers as long as they are available. So continue mass-producing firecrackers, but only the small cigarette-sized and safe ones that they make in China and Hong Kong. But our factories do not know how to make them.

So why not send groups to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to study how to make them? And also the beautifully packed fireworks displays that they export—and smuggle—to the Philippines? That way Filipinos can light firecrackers to their hearts' content and still keep their limbs and lives.

Mixed blessings

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

IT'S HERE! Blessings. Congress ruling that Justice Marianito del Castillo is impeachable after all. Congress ruled on last week, reversing on its own decision made by the Supreme Court in the end of last year, finding Del Castillo innocent of the charge of plagiarism.

The downside is that it's such bad timing, it comes at a time when Renato Corona finds himself in the dock at least in the court of public opinion if not of law—but which is the country last often proceeds over supreme than the Supreme Court—for a variety of transgressions. At the very least, assuming his post by way of a midnight appointment betraying the very essence of Chief Justice, which is to be the epitome of virtue. By so doing, Corona has agreed to be the most unfortunate, or erroneous, of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. At the very most owing allegiance to his sponsor and not to the people, betraying the very essence of Chief Justice, which is, as the title professes, to be the first responder here in the grand scenario, or in a country that promotes justice, by its doing, he is merely promising law in the most miserable way, or in ways that threaten justice.

Del Castillo's impeachment takes the heat off Corona who himself bears targets better for his more potent and grievous transgressions. It also takes the pressure away from him. For if Castillo's impeachment takes a long time—which it is likely to, as he will have the best lawyers money can buy courtesy of the best Supreme Court money can buy—Corona can take refuge in it, borrowing Edsa66 Cardinal Sin, away from the glare of the spotlight. In this world's time it always on the side of inscrutability. Look at how the Ampatuan trial has gone. Two years after "the crime of the century," the nation's can barely remember the crime.

Remember other trial, the agonies to more plentiful and gory?

Once is that I don't know what kind of problem Congress is planning—the notion that it has turned from a den of thieves to a House of Forgers overnight does not make me at all nice—but it's going to be very interesting. Del Castillo is the one member the Supreme Court will get a big way in lessening the future worry of the one institution in this country dedicated to her being the least genuine. Del Castillo of course is one of those justices who can find nothing wrong with anyone, and has a strong record, distinguished that of Corona, to show it. About time we put the fear of God, or justice, among its new's justices.

Two is that Del Castillo's case proves beyond a shadow of doubt how the Court has become the last place where justice can be found. Or indeed, how it has become the new patrimonial where interpretation of the outlines of history and Constitution is beyond challenge to question.

Del Castillo's case has always been enough degree to be plagiarism. It is not plagiarism, it's worse than plagiarism. What Del Castillo did for the Supreme Court is copy word for word the information or opinion expressed by an American lawyer, Ross Cuddle, it was to distort that opinion and make argument for the opposite of what Cuddle intended. Cuddle argued that an argue gave the "comfort women" the right to make government speak up for them before the Japanese. Del Castillo used that to give the right to deny the comfort women that right. If there's any worse display of lack of principle or moral outright. I don't know what it is.

What made things worse than ever all the more that the Supreme Court did not comprehensively clear Del Castillo of the charge, finding "no merit" in the complaint of the UP professors led by Harry Roque and Marvic Leonen, it found the professors themselves guilty of sacrilege. Or in legal equivalent. The Court demanded that the professors show cause why they should not be cited for contempt. Whereas Del's case the Court did not see fit to show cause why the world shouldn't find it utterly contemptible.

Again look at the Supreme Court and see if that is not the one branch of government that has congealed unto itself all the primacy of heaven and earth. Look on the Supreme Court and see if there is not the face of Corona.

There is at least this solace for justice.

At the very least it is solace for justice for the comfort women whom, with its righting a wrong—age-old but one that may not be allowed to be forgotten—and getting some restitution for their ordeal, has been opened once again. The number women have already been dutifully raped, since by the Japanese Army, since by the Supreme Court. It's time they put the justice that has been eluding them, before their tears on earth is over.

At the very most it is a blow for justice for us who thought we had ended it once and for all. It still lurking around in the last place we thought to find it. It shows Corona the path that his fellows had if he should refuse to resign from his position the way Merceditas Gutierrez did and Evan ended call the way Angelo Reyes did. The wheels of justice may move agonizingly slowly in this country, but they grind agonizing. It is the weight those that managed to catch up with. As Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada know very well, who have seen the fury of People Power. As Arroyo knows very well who has seen the implacable rise of Noy Aquino.

By all means let's impeach Minister del Castillo. But let us do it speedily and well so as to see that it propels the journey toward the lasting national and does not create detours to it. That is a challenge the government lawyers who have to be down to the trenches to respond to among its challenges. Here is their chance to do so. It's all very mixed blessings.

But I'll cast will take my blessings where I can find them.

Sovereignty of the people

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

ARTICLE II, SECTION 1 repeatedly bears marks to the will of the sovereign people as guide. Popular sovereignty is in fact a fitting leitmotif upon which a democratic system rests. Our Constitution begins with the assertion that "The Philippines is a democratic and republican State. Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them."

The sovereign people cannot their sovereignty to run: distinct processes. The two processes should not be confused.

The first is through their vote in a plebiscite ratifying or amending the Constitution. Through this process the people express in a permanent manner what the powers of government should be, what the limitations are, how the people who are to exercise the powers of sovereignty are to be chosen and what their duties and rights are. These are powers that, as presently found in the Constitution, powers are divided among three departments, functions, this means that the legislature makes the laws, the executive implements the laws and the judiciary interprets the laws and determines in cases of conflict which among the law and Constitution must prevail in achieving orderly checks and balances.

The second is through the sovereign people's vote in an election. This vote is not an unlimited grant of power. Nor is it a grant of power to exercise outside of the limitations of the will of the sovereign people as expressed in the Constitution. To imagine that an overwhelming vote of the people in an election or a high approval rating in a particular survey is an expression of popular will, more of what they have expressed in a committed manner in the Constitution is dangerous.

Government officials have only so much authority as is given to them by law and the Constitution, and not what they might assume to be given to them by popular whim. A poor lawyer once said to a "whore" named Pacquita Bizarro, "You are a martyr planted thick with lame thorn court to come. **If you cut them down, do you really think that you will be able to withstand the winds that will** blow then?" True, the lawyer was beheaded: issued that the consequences of his behaving contrary to the sovereign's will would be dire.

In this critical moment of our constitutional history, my hope is that the justices of the Supreme Court, imperfect though they may be, will act capitalism and that others in the judiciary will not tremble in their boots and yield what is unconstitutionally theirs to President Aquino. If they do, it would be tragic for our nation.

Impeachment. Impeachment is very much in the air. It is a legitimate tool established by the Constitution. But it is a two-edged sword. It can be an instrument of reform but it can also be an instrument of vindictive persecution carried out by embittered followers. For this reason the Constitution has surrounded the process with safeguards which limit the number of people subject to impeachment and which makes its success difficult to achieve.

The divisive issue of the moment is the impeachment in relation to the membership of the Supreme Court and remove the "obstacles to progress." The initial target has been revealed, with more expected to follow. But there are 15 justices of the Supreme Court. I am not surprised if the Palace people do not expect impeachment, a very partisan partisan and political exercise, to achieve a prochoice majority Court. Not in the near future anyway. Hence, another impatient rallying cry is begin, ranges for hasn't Occupy the Supreme Court!

Reasonable? Glad to see citizens a supreme Court whom he found to be a stumbling block by trying to pack it with people of his choice. He failed: in the end, Roosevelt had to wait until the retirement of the justices he disagreed with. It did not happen during his term. And to date Obamacare in the US Supreme Court's continue. Count the convening number of votes where the vote is 5-4.

I have been reading constitutional law long enough to realize that there often are two or more possible votes to a constitutional argument. And the outcome of a constitutional debate often depends upon the modality of constitutional interpretation a justice might use. As are political views, or his par. it, describing the Supreme Court's line including the famous 4F that I Mitch wrote how to indulge in half-truths concerning each other and exaggerations of important truths. This is because the Supreme Court is not just a court. It is also a political institution. Because the key provisions of the Constitution are couched in grand ambiguities and because the key provisions of the Constitution affect the basic issues of our life, of our liberties, and of our happiness, the Supreme Court, by the exercise of judicial review, wields tremendous political power.

Moreover, the composition of a Court at any given moment in history just a cumulative of chance. It is the result of a deliberative creation. One only has to look at the confirmation debates and what presidents have in the choice of US Supreme Court justices to see how personal, political and ideological considerations play a determinative role. It is just that I find that we are making enough to the process of choosing justices. If we did, the Court would now have a different face.

What is now referred to as the Aurora Court took nine years in the making through a selection process heavily tilted in favor of an incumbent president. That tilted process worked. Similarly, I doubt that Presidents Aquino will have time, politics constitutional limits, to create an Aquino Court during his term. And since so much depends on the outcome of constitutional debates, what is required of him, if he wants the constitutional up per hand without resorting to bullying, is to build a strong, not necessarily loud, constitutional discipline team.

The price we pay

HIGH BLOOD

Bobbie Tilla

AFTER MONTHS of interviews, endless paperwork, and interminable wait, my husband finally secured a position to manage a poultry farm in Surara, Samar. This was after he lost his job selling veterinary products in Manila.

How well I remember those long rides in the Beetle with our infant son in my lap, circumventing Batangas, Laguna and Calamba in search of poultry and piggery farms. Mag-Quasi and GSM had not yet been invented but we have no worse clear to ourselves the sin of wrath and the demons of hell-hole left at my doorstep were a refreshing change from the tiresome Bicolnos and downtime-like suburbs piled our with. Above all, I liked playing Henry Higgins to his Eliza Doolittle, advising him on the latest cut of jeans, taking him to restaurant and places, introducing him to the finer things in life, such as "Chinese" in matters of a magnitude. I'd tantrified on the feat of the photo albums chronicling our days together swimming in the beaches of Batangas, hugging with fruit vendors in Tagaytay, enjoying bowls of steaming halo-halo in little nooks on the road to Tanauan.

I must have been very clever. Why, even my friends to share his market bill to her knees with a quiet sign of the cross. But Willie gave me a look of such total indulgence I couldn't help flashing a bit triumphant smile at the women I would soon be calling sisters-in-law.

Willie fell for the job in Samar when our son Dexter was nine and his sister Sharon was eight. Dexter was a dynamo in motion. He learned to walk when he was barely a year old, and then he was running all over the place—the quick succession of his feet on the wooden floor of our home a constant source of delight to me. By the time Sharon, the pampered one of the family, came along, Dexter was no longer in terms of excitement, and my small household was complete.

Willie's family had moved to Eastern Samar to escape the violence in Northern Samar. Willie's father was a member of the New People's Army (NPA) who was killed in an encounter with government troops. Willie's mother, a teacher, was also killed in the same encounter. Willie was only 10 years old when he was left to fend for himself. He was taken in by his uncle, who was a member of the NPA. Willie was also a member of the NPA

Higher than the highest court

LIKE HOODED bishop-jurors of the Spanish Inquisition trying a religious heresy, the supreme chamber of the Supreme Court of the Philippines, through one of its members, declared Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago "guilty beyond reasonable doubt" of "betraying the public trust" by saying "like you are more powerful than the Court." (Inquirer, 12/1/11). This supposes that the now Independent Court is grossly misconstrued with and obsessed by the potency of its public authority or power.

The issue over the Court's arbitrary cause about with its perceived hasty issuance of an order, to either challenging the Executive's power and threatening the latter's power that to protect the public interest. The order would have allowed an individual suspected of committing serious crimes against the people to elude the clutches of the law. Opinion polls, as well as media coverage, show that the public is overwhelmingly supporting the Executive by an overage between 80-90.

The issue involves not just the matter of just retribution, to determine the future of prosecution of Filipinos, and their political and economic security. But of powerful government officials were allowed to betray, agree and again, with impunity—through checks and balances rather violations—the cries granted them by the public as what happened during the Marcos, Estrada and Arroyo administrations, since the framers of our nation sought for just indeed.

Thus, the Constitution vests in the Supreme Court the ultimate authority to interpret the law. But both the Constitution, which is made by men, and the Court, composed of humans, cannot be entrusted in all respects. The power to interpret can be abused and made to support evil opposite to the letter and spirit of the law.

Take the Marcos dictatorship. It was considered constitutional by the Supreme Court, though it ran counter to the Constitution itself, which pronounced the liberties of the people.

How the people wrong to defy the Supreme Court by using against the dictatorship that had been declared constitutional by the Supreme Court? History and generations of Filipinos say so. Was it not heroical for the Supreme Court of the public—not to legalize the dictatorship? There would long remain the anonymous, nor is even in the execution of laws by the authorities if, in the eyes of the public, they are patently unjust, biased, autocratic and discriminatory).

The people are not bound to respect the courts, even the highest tribunal, if its rulings made the ruling had misused and distorted the letter and spirit of the Constitution and the laws to suit the justices' and the judges' interests and those of powerful individuals who had appointed them to office.

There is a higher court than the Supreme Court. And that is the Court of Public Opinion.

—RANDY DAVID,
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Statement for Truth in History
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LETTERS

Edsa: keep the name

I did not in favor of renaming "Edsa" to "Ninoy Aquino Avenue" or any "Cory Aquino Avenue." Aside from causing confusion to the taxi and bus-hiring drivers and to the motorists, every renaming of a major road creates a problem. Some roads are packed to see the word "Edsa" in their names books. Guys then would not know what or where to borrow, they might wonder why a parallel, would not have a sprung by an unnamed politician. Then another "Boulevard."

Those another suggestions. Once passed, there are a couple of bridges spanning the Pasig River that are not yet named after world-renowned Filipinos. Among them are the "Makati-Mandaluyong Bridge," the words bear "Ayala Bridge" and the "Ortigas Bridge." Why not rename one of them as the "Cory Aquino Bridge"?

A nearby built road or highway in Pasig City was named for the late president. In this case, I recommend the portable from C-6 Road, which can be renamed as "Cory Aquino Avenue," if and when it is finally built—although, the way the the current administration's push for private partnership program is moving along, this may not happen in this term times.

—LEONARDO DE CHOS,
leonardo.pacheco@hotmail.com

Finding win-win formula for PH

THE LATEST edition of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) group "Profit" stands for Ideas Business Matters" during announcement of a fresh plot against the interests. As it turned out, this corporate-sounding fancy title did not stop the transfer of La Ghetto to the "Peruvian Memorial Medical Center, where her additionally held on-trial from there Joseph Estrada a decade ago. Whether it's homes, points of view, random choice, it appears that the "hate pot" also plundered the Philippines with impunity for almost a decade is now reversing her consequences.

Actions and platforms have formed around both Aquino and Pandan. Again, each doing their best to represent the interests of their overall constituent groups. In doing this, the warring sides are starting to appear more like Coke's and Pepsi's competitors. Both a fun way not avoid finances as much as a network as plans to pull it off. Both are trying to attract and the immigrants from our country can easily navigate such a global network that can be readily mobilized by the various campaigns of candidates in their areas.

Equally important, the Philippines also has natural resources and income reform to link to its aligned—some wealth to curb a global Filipino network and the rest of the world. If Filipinos actors can see current's the local businessmen that are already showing wealth and initiative than here is other new programs, the economic of more Filipinos can be redirected from a no-win bickering over Ninoy's crimes and possible wealth toward a positive and productive win-win formula for our country. Livelihood, employment balance and self-reliant communities.

If this needs only a few executives and ministers to work with the private sector to do this. Why? Why not even need politicians if the private sector decides that it wants to do this all by itself. The small upside to the range of Transparency International and the hopeful model mentioned by some surveys are all indicators that people are ready to march on the many matters?

But the Filipino people will need a pipe and a song. If Filipino the good, many beautiful songs can be produced. One of those could be "Bahid Pinoy," a countryside entrepreneurship advocacy refusing to replace on-site other employment dependency mindset.

Crying "Wolf!" won't solve problems because work will.

—JOSE DIAZ,
jcdiaz@gmail.com

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
The Board of Foreign Service Examinations of the Department of Foreign Affairs announces the holding of the

2012 FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER (FSO) EXAMINATIONS

to recruit candidates for appointment to the position of
Foreign Service Officer, Class IV (FSO IV).

The Examination is composed of five (5) parts which shall be held on the following dates:

Qualifying Test	19 February 2012
Preliminary Interview	31 March 2012 (tentative)
Written Examination	4, 5 & 6 April 2012 (tentative)
Psychological Test	28 to 29 June 2012 (tentative)
Oral Test	29, 30 & 31 August (tentative)

IMPORTANT

(1) Qualifications:
1. Age Limit – Applicant should be less than thirty-five (35) years of age on the day of the Qualifying Test.
2. Education – Applicant should be a holder of at least a four (4) year bachelor's degree.
3. Citizenship – Applicant should be a Filipino citizen and has established permanent residence in the Philippines for at least one (1) year prior to the Qualifying Test of the FSO Examinations.

(2) Requirements:
a. Certified True Copy (CTC) of transcript of records, bearing the seal of the college or university;
b. Certified True Copy (CTC) of diploma or certificate of graduation, bearing the seal of the college or university;
c. Original birth certificate issued by the National Statistics Office;
d. For naturalized Filipinos, copy of naturalization papers or Philippine passport;
e. For applicants with dual or multiple citizenships: (i) a notarized affidavit renouncing their allegiance to countries other than the Philippines upon passing the examination; and (ii) a notarized affidavit stating that they are permanent residents of the Philippines.
f. For married applicants: certified true copy of marriage certificate issued by the National Statistics Office. If married to a foreigner, an applicant must first secure from the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, through the Board of Foreign Service Examinations, a written authority to take the FSO examinations.
g. Eight (8) pieces 1-1/2in x 2in, black and white or color photographs, taken within six (6) months before the date of the Qualifying Test, showing the full frontal view of the face of the applicant **with a name tag**. Photocopied, scanned and digitally enhanced pictures shall not be accepted; and
h. Two (2) self-addressed and stamped envelopes marked as **priority mail**.

(3) Deadline.
Completed application forms together with the documentary requirements must be returned to any of the DFA Regional Consular Offices enumerated below not later than **09 January 2012**, or to the DFA Main Office, not later than **13 January 2012** for evaluation and processing.

(4) Application Forms and relevant information regarding the examination may be downloaded from the Department of Foreign Affairs website (**www.dfa.gov.ph**). Forms may also be obtained personally from the following offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs:

DFA Main Office: Board of Foreign Service Examinations, 2nd floor, Department of Foreign Affairs, 2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City * Tel. (02) 834-3000 3083 * Fax (02) 551-0978

DFA RCO Ilocos: Don Mariano Building, 10 Legarda Road, Baguio City * Tel. (074) 424-1200, 442-3208 * Fax (074) 442-2395, rco_baguio@yahoo.com

DFA RCO La Union: Pacific Building, Quezon Hills, San Fernando, La Union * Tel. (072) 607-8487, 607-8480 * Fax (072) 607-8481 * Email: dfa_launion@yahoo.com

DFA RCC Tuguegarao: Regional Government Center, Carig Sur, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan Valley * Tel. (078) 846-4611, 846-1482 * Fax (078) 846-2310 * Email: rco_tuguegarao@yahoo.com

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DFA RCO Batangas: Batangas Piers and Convention Center, National Road, Alumbrang, Bays, Batangas City * Tel. (043) 723-0373 * Email: dfa.rco.batangas@yahoo.com

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DFA RCO Cagayan de Oro: Limketkai Drive, Cagayan de Oro City * Tel. (088)221 724-909, (088) 857-2172 * Fax (088)221 726-010 * Email: rco@cdo.weebly.com, rco.cdo@gmail.com

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Across the NATION

Chinese ship loaded with black sand sinks

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—A Chinese-registered cargo ship loaded with magnetite sand sank off the coast of Aparri, Cagayan, on Saturday night, killing one of its 19 crew members, police said.

Chief Insp. Bernar Hecis, Aparri police chief, said the cargo ship "Chang Jie 210" capsized about 2 kilometers off Punta village, as it made its way to the Babuyan Channel at about 11 p.m.

Parts said the boat Sunday. Director Lin Guanghuo, drowned while he and two other survivors undercoat drove. Another Chinese crew member, Liu Libo, was reported missing.

The 16 other crew members—12 Chinese and four Filipinos—survived by riding on lifeboats. They were rescued on Sunday morning by officials of Linao village, also in Aparri.

Police said the ship, which reportedly had been commissioned by San Jose Philippines Inc., came from Lubi town and had just started its voyage in China when it met huge waves upon leaving the Cagayan River delta.

San Jose is one of the foreign companies allowed by the Philippine government to conduct small-scale mining operations for black sand in Cagayan.

The rescued crew members were taken to the Charles W. Selby Memorial Hospital in Aparri for treatment, but doctors found them to be in good health.

Senior Chief Petty Officer Ernesto Belen, acting station commander of the Philippine Coast Guard station in Aparri, said the ship was set to transport its load of black sand to the port of Fuzhou in China.

Huge waves battered the 2,993-ton vessel in the Aparri delta, as the current from the Babuyan Channel and the water flow from the swollen Cagayan River converged, Belen said.

Philippine National Police spokesperson Agrimero Cruz said search and rescue operations were ongoing for nine more members of the crew, a Chinese national, who remained missing as of Sunday morning. —Aparri, Ines Medes Gimeno, inquirer Northern Luzon and AFP

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40 rights violations cases in C. Luzon unsolved

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Brock and Gemson Fortuna have been searching for their son, Daryl, since he and two others were taken by armed men from a Bible-study session in Cantilan on March 9, 2010.

Elsewhere in Cantilan, Rosario Micallawa, 60, weeps over his three sons who were nabbed in hostilities over buried bones nor blood spattered from a violent encounter.

These two cases top the list of 40 unsolved cases of rights violations in Central Luzon that were documented by Driesel Ci, as having taken place during Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's presidency and the first year of President Aquino's term.

Driesel Ci, vice chair Karen Bengil said that from the two with which these cases were processed by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and by provincial prosecutors, the Aquino administration had "not been helpful in identifying, arresting or jailing the perpetrators in the police and military."

The relatives of the Micallawa brothers have implicated the police's public safety officer in Cantilan in their murder.

Another case cited by rights advocates involves Senior Supt. Madapat Makansi, a former chief of the province's public safety office in Pampanga, who was accused of having tortured five men.

The prosecutor said "there may indeed have been" torture, but there is insufficient evidence including Makansi as the perpetrator."

PJK

Central Luzon posted the highest number of extrajudicial killings (EJK) during Arroyo's term, Bengil said.

At least 61 of 305 cases of EJK between 2001 and August 2008 occurred in the region, according to a study jointly commissioned by the Asia Foundation and the US Agency for International Development.

Of 305 victims nationwide, 72 were from Central Luzon.

Bengil said that while Mr. Aquino had declared human rights as one of his administration's cornerstone, "the hidden extreme decisiveness in laying down a clear and durable framework in addressing human rights cases."

"While he is decisive in pursuing cases against [deceased] he failed to make accountable those human rights violators in the military and police," Bengil said.

NPA

In Lanao City, Col. Generoso Sulima, the spokesperson of the military's Southern Luzon Command (Solcom), said the communist New People's Army (NPA) were responsible for at least 38 cases of rights violations in the Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions this year.

Of the 38 victims, 47 were civilians, 6 were policemen, 4 were militiamen, and one a soldier. Sulima said in a statement, he failed to make accountable those human rights violators in the military and police," Bengil said.

The Solcom commander, Lt. Gen. Roland Tarnahal, said the NPA was responsible for the death of former Army Cpl. Ferdinand Valencia, whose remains were found by government troops on Aug. 2 in Pasay, Laguna, with the help of a rebel informant.

Quoting the victim's brother, Bolina said Valencia was abducted by the NPA in May from his home in Real, Quezon.

The body was found with a cracked skull and stab wounds. "The Ranger veteran—in his chest was cut with a knife," Bolina said. With a report from Dyllic Maribel Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Syjuco hits nonrelease of P70-M dev't fund

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—Like his former boss, former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Iloilo Rep. Augusto "Bobot" Syjuco is crying persecution.

On his 58th birthday party on Sunday, Syjuco, a close ally of Arroyo, decried the nonrelease of his P70 million annual Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF), blaming his political rivals who are close to President Benigno Aquino III.

"The people of my district especially the poor ones are suffering due to the nonrelease of my PDAF because of two 'evil ones' who have the ears of the President," Syjuco said in impassioned speech before around 500 of his supporters who included municipal and barangay officials of Iloilo's second congressional district.

Syjuco did not name those he blamed for the nonrelease of his PDAF funds but he said they were "poisoning the mind" of the President.

A former director general of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) during the Arroyo administration, Syjuco is facing various graft charges for alleged anomalies including overpricing and "ghost" projects in Tesda-funding hundreds of millions of pesos.

Syjuco claimed that of the 284 congressmen, he was one of only five representatives whose PDAF was not released.

The others were Negros Occidental Representatives Jeremy Marañon and Jules Ledesma, both allies of Aquino; Leyte Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and Governors Jose Ong, Dionisio "Dan" Arquiza and Leonardo "Boy" Javier.

Syjuco said his PDAF has not been released since April this year despite several letters and appeals to the Department of Budget and Management.

"I am told by my staff in Manila with which I was following up that there is an order from above to hold back my PDAF," Syjuco told reporters at the sidelines of his birthday party.

But he said he did not believe that the withholding of his PDAF is due to his political color and friendship with the former president.

He pointed out that most of the 30 members of the House minority bloc including most of whom were Lakas members, have received their PDAF.

"Even [former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo] has received hers," Syjuco said.

He lamented the nonrelease of the funds saying he has no more own critical of the present administration.

"I have been quiet. I want the President to succeed. But it is my constituents who are suffering from all of these," Syjuco said.

Syjuco also survived the ballot ban left Lakas on Dec. 5 and joined the Nacionalista Party (NP) led by Sen. Manuel Villar.

He said the NP would choose 40 congressmen by February aside from the five members in the Senate.

BAGUIO Gardias engaged in salvaging and recycling continue to collect this trash trash each day from 129 villages of the summer capital. Tubo residents joined a Baguio court and the government of Antipas, La Union, in petitioning the Supreme Court to close Baguio's writ of kalikasan to finally shut down this dump. Portions of the dump collapsed in August, killing six people and polluting the waters used by dam

Writ of kalikasan sought to rehabilitate dump

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

TUBA, BENGUET—Residents who witnessed the growth of Baguio City's mountain of garbage joined on Saturday an environmental suit thrown up by Municipal Actor Ben Cabrera, Benguet Rep. Ronald Cosalan and the municipal council of Antipas, La Union, to compel the summer capital to rehabilitate its only dump.

Four Baguio-based lawyers would transmit the petition seeking a writ of kalikasan to the Baguio government and the Supreme Court today, Cosalan said here, after they secured the signatures of Barangay Salingsingan residents whose houses and water sources were affected by Baguio trash that toppled on Aug. 27.

A writ of kalikasan is a legal remedy provided by the high court, through environmental protection order, that will bar agencies, firms and government officials from undertaking projects or activities that directly impact the environment.

The writ would force the Baguio government to stop using the Irisan dump and to use the city's resources to start rehabilitating the facility immediately, said lawyer Francisco Claver, who drew up the petition alongside lawyers Noe Vil. Intowero, Georgie Pillay and Pablito Sanchez, former president of the Free Legal Assistance Group (Flag).

Officially, the dump is Irisan, which towers over Tadiangan, had been decommissioned in 2008.

The trash slide, which killed 40 people and which polluted Asin Road and its neighboring creeks, had forced authorities to dump the high volume of rain dumped by Typhoon "Pedring," according to a report of the city government.

For months, the garbage hauled Asin Road, which straddles Tuba and Baguio City.

Boy who saved icons from burning Christmas tree honored

By Dolly Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—When falling Ig vendor Jacob Rivera, 17, rushed to the burning giant Christmas tree in Perez park here last Tuesday, his son an impulse decision just like the rest of the pack of kibitzers—to watch.

"The return I saw the icons of baby Jesus with Maria Mary and Saint Joseph in a manger at the base of the burning tree, I did not think of personal danger. I immediately acted to save them from burning," Rivera said in Filipino as he recalled his experience.

Rivera, a high school dropout, said what motivated him to save the Nativity scene was his belief, nurtured since childhood, that the religious icons are the symbols of Christmas.

"If I just stood there and did nothing to prevent the burning of the scene, I will surely feel guilty. And I don't want to have a feeling of guilt, that's why I pushed me to save them," said Rivera, son of a fish ball vendor and plastic housewife in Barangay Gulang.

The unexpected act of Rivera and three other young wise—Jovin Pinion, 18; Yoly Panonces, 19; and Marjohn Barreto, 23, who also helped in putting out the fire, was recorded in just in video footage and photos taken by employees of the provincial government during the fire.

Provincial Governor Rafael Nantes would commend the four young men for their "heroic act" in saving the Nativity scene.

The staff in the provincial tourism office immediately searched for the four youngsters.

Melanie Lenargas, executive assistant of Gov. David Suarez, who was at the local tourism office, said the boys was to be given due recognition by the provincial government in a children's program scheduled Friday.

"Aside from formal recognition of their bravery and courage, good acts, Governor Suarez prepared some Christmas gifts for them. We consider them as heroes. Their strong sense of subconscious is worthy of emulation," Lenargas said.

When he reached the fire scene, some 50 viewers from the bibingkan mall, Rivera said he saw lots of kibitzers.

"Some boys were eating the statues of animals and the three kings outside the manger but no one dared to go under the burning tree to save the baby Jesus," he recalled.

The teenage boy who earns P60 a day from helping tend the bibingkan mall at the park said he grabbed a red cloth he picked up from one of the stalls near the burning tree to protect his body from falling ashes and burning debris and rushed towards the base of the blazing tree to save the crib of baby Jesus.

He said he never knew how he was able to get out of the fire with the icons unscathed.

"I spent a happy time with Mama Mary because her son is not with me and with my other sons," he recalled. "I'm lucky because I did not suffer any injuries. I believed that they (the religious icons) protected me," said the boy, whose family is a devout Catholic.

The Quezon provincial government's 30-foot tall Christmas tree has been lighted with colorful lights and multicolored lights caught fire on Tuesday.

Heavy rains had soaked the tree's wiring which could have caused the lights to spark and start a fire when these were switched on, according to initial investigation conducted by firemen and provincial officials.

The giant holiday display, with a Nativity scene at its base, was first opened to the public last Monday's ceremony which coincided with the start of the three-day Christmas bazaar and trade fair.

Not wanting to dampen the festive mood at the park, a provincial official announced that the lights Christmas tree would be replaced with a new one made from steel pole and wires.

"The first order of Governor Suarez was to immediately build a new Christmas tree and all scheduled programs and activities at the park will continue as scheduled," Lenargas said in an interview over dzCE FM.

The giant Christmas tree was a "labor of love" by local officials, employees, coconut farmers and donors who all donated cash or coconuts and helped to build the huge holiday display that symbolized their common aspirations to rehabilitate the ailing coconut industry.

A VENDOR saved these religious icons after the giant Christmas tree caught fire at the Perez Park in Lucena City on Monday.

NEWSBRIEFS

TUGUEGARAO CITY

6 prisoners bolt jail

SIX PRISONERS escaped from the Cagayan provincial jail here after poking guns at their guards on Sunday morning, police said. Senior Supt. Marc Sylvestre, Cagayan police director, said they went in undetected by the inmates—Vincent Barbaza, Jong Romero, Kevin Dizon, Christopher Tan, Aaron Tan and Agustin Corsiga—managed to sneak a gun into their cells.

The prisoners, who locked up after forcing their guards to open their cells at 5 a.m., were charged with murder, frustrated murder, robbery and car theft charges. The prisoners fled aboard two Toyota vans seen parked outside the prison compound.

Sylvestre said Cagayan police officials have sent alerts and photographs of the escapees to police offices in Cagayan Valley on they could set up checkpoints at the provincial borders in Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Kalinga and Apayao to arrest them. Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

LUCENA CITY

2 suspected robbers killed

TWO SUSPECTED robbers riding in tandem in motorcycle were killed in a shootout with police early Saturday along Maharlika highway in Sariaya, Quezon, before daybreak on Saturday, police said.

Senior Supt. Ednalvin Villaseñor, Quezon police chief, said one of the suspects, identified as Ronald Villamor, 28, and an unidentified companion, were spotted at around 1 a.m. speeding through a police checkpoint in Barangay Tumbaga. It aboard a motorcycle without plate number.

The policemen gave chase and overtook the suspects at a checkpoint along Maharlika in Lucena. But the policemen instructed the duo to alight from their vehicle for routine check, report said. The suspects drew their short firearms and fired at the lawmen. The police returned fire killing the suspects on the spot. Further police investigation identified Villamor as member of the dreaded Lucena-Lalay robbery/holdup gang, said Villaseñor. Dolly T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

BACOLOD CITY

Woman, child drown

A MOTHER and her 2-year-old daughter drowned on Friday afternoon after she jumped into the waters of Silay City, Negros Occidental, to save her daughter who fell from the vessel.

The fatalities were identified as Michelle Tiampong, 38, and her daughter Jeanmichelle, both passengers of MV "St Peter the Apostle Boat" built for Mactan Island.

Lt. Commander Domeador Senados, Bacolod Coast Guard head, told the Inquirer that the girl fell into the vessel and into the waters, about 2.7 nautical miles from the shoreline of Silay, about 6:30 p.m. when the boat sailed from Bacolo what? to Bacolod. It was not known why and how the girl fell into the ship.

But Michelle was heard shouting when the girl fell. She then dived into the waters in an attempt to save her daughter.

When the crew learned about what happened, they stopped the vessel, brought them to the mainland and sent a boat to look for the mother and daughter.

The bodies of Michelle and Jeanmichelle were found 30 minutes later. Zeb F. Gonos, Inquirer Visayas

Dutertes clash over coal-fired power plant

DAVAO CITY—Even after Mayor Sara Duterte vetoed the city council's land reclassification ordinance that will pave the way for a 300-megawatt coal-fired power plant in the city the controversial proposal is still alive. Her father, Vice Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, said the veto has not yet killed the project.

Saying he has been consistent in his support for the project of the Aboitiz Power Corp., the elder Duterte said the city council was going to meet soon to override the mayor's veto and push through with the coal-fired plant in the city.

"Since the city council finally overrides the mayor's veto, the mayor will have no other choice but to implement it because it has been mandated upon her by law," the vice mayor said.

"In the end, it is the city council who will decide. The one who is supreme here is the people," he said.

"The legislative body composed of elected city councilors, is here to pass legislation," he added. "I have made my stand and I have been consistent in pushing through with the project. I have visited the coal-fired plant in Villanueva (Misamis Oriental), but I still have to see someone who died of cancer," Vice Mayor Duterte said.

The mayor earlier cited the dangers posed on human health and the environment as her reasons for vetoing the ordinance. She said she could not compromise health and the environment for an energy source that has been rejected by most countries in the world.

Although environment groups lauded the mayor's stand, they were worried that the city council would override the veto.

Joan Lintao, coordinator of the No to Coal group, called on the public to rally support behind Mayor Duterte and Councilor Leah Librada, who has been consistently opposing the ordinance because of the dangers it poses to human health.

"Unless there is real change of heart among members of the city council, there's a very big chance that they will only override the mayor," Lintao said.

She called on the public to register and join Oblivion and more green and pink ribbons in support of the two women. (Jhodilyn Lacuesta, Inquirer Mindanao)

SARA DUTERTE

CHRISTMAS MALL Malls in Davao City are decked with decor as Christmas, the most anticipated holiday of the year, fast approaches.

Bid to split Laguna town still alive, proponents say

By Marlon Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—A provincial ordinance that will divide a village of San Pedro town was restored in the form of a new resolution, this time pushing for the creation of a separate and distinct municipality of San Vicente in Laguna province.

Barangay San Vicente, said to be the most progressive and biggest in San Pedro in terms of population, kept "alive" its bid to become a separate municipality from the town, with the filing of a resolution at the Laguna provincial board.

"Barangay San Vicente has all the qualifications to become a municipality," said the village council resolution, signed by village Chair Alfaro Mark Villena and seven councilors.

The resolution, which was filed in August, is now being reviewed by the joint provincial board committee on laws and rules and barangay affairs. The first committee hearing was held in September.

According to the resolution, there is an "existing sentiment" among the population in the barangay for San Vicente to become a separate and distinct municipality.

Requirement

For the creation of a new municipality, the Local Government Code requires a population of at least 25,000 as certified by the National Statistics Office; an average annual income of P25 million; and a contiguous land territory of at least 50 square kilometers as certified by the Land Management Bureau.

San Vicente has a population of around 66,000 and an annual income of P27 million to P35 million for the past three years.

The next part, we are to submit documents from the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) to certify the land area," Villena said in a recent interview with the Inquirer.

In 1997, the Laguna provincial board passed an ordinance that was supposed to subdivide the barangay into seven smaller villages.

This was amended by another provincial ordinance in 2002, since the plebiscite, supposedly for the ratification of the seven newly created villages, "was not conducted within the required period due to lack of preparation," said Laguna Provincial Board Secretary Francisco Macabobay.

"But for some reasons, no plebiscite (again) took place (in 2002)," he said.

Sources in the provincial government, here, believed the 1997 ordinance was made supposedly to pave the way for the separation of San Vicente from its mother municipality of San Pedro.

"It must have been easier the other way around. They should have packed first but the separation of San Vicente (as a new municipality) and its division into smaller villages should come next," said a source, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to speak.

Opposition

If approved, the separation of San Vicente may prevent its mother municipality of San Pedro from becoming a city, said Board Member Benedicta Maria Paloral Jr., chair of the committee on laws and rules.

San Pedro, the municipality of Laguna, which is closest to Metro Manila, is bidding to become a city a campaign by Mayor Calixto Catedral Jr.

In his letter to the committee in September, Catedral expressed his "vehement opposition" to the enactment of the San Vicente resolution, saying the municipal board, "which has more knowledge and supervision over the barangays, was not notified nor given the opportunity to be heard regarding the resolution."

"There is a strong support from the people of San Pedro, Laguna, who oppose (the separation) because they do not want barangay San Vicente to be separated from the municipality of San Pedro, Laguna," Catedral's letter added.

US teener escaped as Abu bandits slept

From page A1

area and four.

Initial news reports (not the inquirer) had said the teenager was freed by his captors.

"He (Hawley) escaped from his captors two days ago and he was hiding in bushes where he was found," Mayor Sadewisk Farigay of Lantican City in that has told the Inquirer. "Soldiers told him to follow a river until until he reached the boundary of Lantican."

A happy Christmas

Lobregat said in a news briefing that Lantican had told him he escaped while his captors were asleep and that he followed the river "until the sites that he thought he would."

He said the teenager had been flown to Manila and arrived over to 10:30 a.m.

US Ambassador Harry Thomas and the teenager would be reunited with his family soon.

"In this holiday season, nothing makes us happier than knowing that an innocent victim is returned to his family in time for holiday celebrations," Thomas said. "I also want to acknowledge the courage of Brother Eugenio Vagni, who is with the anglican this long ordeal."

He said there would be a "speedy investigation and prosecution of all those involved in the kidnapping of American citizens."

Phone call

Lobregat said the teenager had talked by phone with his Filipino-American mother, Gee in Tuolo Lantonnen.

The boy was kidnapped with his mother and a cousin, Wanwah Ishmin, in Zamboanga City on July 11 and taken by boat to nearby Basilan Island. Gretta was freed in Malaso town on Oct. 2, while Ishmin was freed in the same town on Nov. 12.

Gretta, a member of the Samsa tribe, was adopted by an Army-Filipino couple when she was young. She returned to Zamboanga City to meet her biological family. She bought a piece of land, planned with economic plans, on Tagubao Island here, where she had planned to build a vacation house.

Farigay said the young Lantonnen told him he walked for almost two days and did not know he was already in Barangay Ballengon, 8 kilometers from the Lantican city proper, on Thursday.

Farigay said the teenager told him he survived by eating seedless processable green bananas by his captors, and drinking coconut trees to get its meat, eating its meat and drinking its juice.

A barangay councilman, Kenny Israel Hid, was planning to follow the river when he saw the boy running at around 3:30 p.m. on Sunday.

He followed the boy and found him, terrified, hiding under the thick bushes just near the river," Farigay said.

Using his limited English, Hid talked to Lantonnen and learned that he was a hostage victim from Zamboanga City. Hid tried to convince him to come out as he was already in safe hands. "But the boy refused," Farigay said.

"So Hid called his barangay chair, Mercedita Hilario, to convince the boy," Farigay said. Hilario, with politeness and militiamen, went to Sitio Linggasan, 4 kilometers from the village center of Balingan, to see the teenager.

'Good guys'

When Hilario's team arrived at around 7 p.m., the village chief called Farigay and Hid convinced to speak with the mayor over the phone.

"I assured him that he was being furnished by good guys and he'll be brought to authorities that can bring him to his family," the mayor said. "I met him in the military headquarters around 9 p.m. (Saturday). He looked so skinny, with rashes all over his body."

Farigay said that when Hid first saw Lantonnen, the teenager's body was covered with rashes. Lantonnen later said he was planning to bathe in the river when Hid saw him.

The captors earlier called the Lantonnen family in Campbell County, Virginia, to demand a ransom. Lobregat said he did not know if any amount was paid.

'I did it by myself'

Abby Col. Ricardo Nuaya said the kidnappers were believed led by Furaji Indama, an Abu Sayyaf bandit notorious for ransom kidnappings and beheadings.

When Nuaya asked the teenager if he was freed, which would indicate that ransom was paid, or escaped, Lantonnen replied that he fled from the captors. "No, I really did it myself," he quoted Lantonnen as saying.

Ransom kidnappings are blamed mostly on the Abu Sayyaf, an al-Qaeda-linked group on a land of 81 exotoxic organizations.

The Abu Sayyaf, which has less than 400 armed fighters, was founded on Basilan in the 1990s as an offshoot of a violent Moro insurgency that has been raging for decades. Hundreds died in the group's wars for an independent Moro state in southern Philippines, including Basilan, to train and equip Philippine forces has are barred from local combat.

The escape of Lantonnen came a week after suspected Abu Sayyaf gunmen in the outskirts of town of Metro Manila's busiest intersections, and to the exasperation of roaring engines, pulls on an elaborate dance show as his deftly golden traffic flow.

The stocky and hotstock cop, Inspector Leo Lopez from The King of Pop, Hensley the most famous used by budget airlines.

"It will take time to lay down the infrastructure, from the government land that Southern, it will take time for plane to be installed," he said.

In a text message to the locals, Chief Insp. Jessey Tenion of the Southern Police District (SPD) identified the fatalities aboard the aircraft as Capt. Ramon Alba, his co-pilot Jonas Kim Lantica, and flight attendant, the lone passenger.

Fatalities

At least three bodies at the crash site were identified. Marbel Nelson, Margarita Medina and James Brayan Ramon. The identities of the seven remaining victims were still being ascertained, according to Tenion, the SPD spokesperson.

Among the injured were Roldan Balubaca Jr., Bhil Saldivia, 30; Mary Saldivia, 11; Mark Ryan Saldivia, 12; Rodelyn Medina, 11; Kristy Josh Medina, 8; Nicky Ramos, 38; Emelita Abato, 47; Melvin Nicolas, 38, and Ian Miguel, 19.

Both Nelsy, a homicide, said she thought the pilot was attempting to land in the area because of the open space and a creek but obviously misunderstood.

She said children had told him that the aircraft and the plane frantically waving and motioning them to run away from its path moments before the crash.

"The children thought that the plane was doing an exhibition until it crashed and was to blame to safety like it was made of paper," Nelsy said.

"He kept someone would be punished because of this," Ramon Medina, 28, a construction worker whose sister died[illegible] to the injured conditions after sustaining fourth to fifth degree burns. His wife and child were also injured.

Medina was on the second floor of his house when he saw the aircraft hover a few meters above the rubber tree in the area. "When I heard what sounded like gunfire at four times, I jumped off from the window," Medina said.

The eighteen aboard the downed and Ramos engulfed one another's bodies in search of people, their child, a relative and a friend, Medina said. Three fire were found huddled and locked in embrace as if holding each other was their last resort to survive, he said.

Previous crashes

Saturday's crash was the second such incident to hit the area since December 2009 when a cargo plane bound for Dalawan crashed into a warehouse and burst into flames only Lao Pilloc City killing at least four people aboard and injuring 15 homes.

In February 2006, a single-engine Cessna plane belly-landed in a cogonal patch at the reclamation area in Barangay between Dimasalang and Barangay Bacong Kawak, within sight of the crowded SM Mall of Asia. The aircraft's pilot miraculously survived.

In April 2007, a two-seat Cessna 206 fell and exploded on a residential lot at Barangay Marcelle, killing its pilot. No houses were damaged but the plane was completely burned.

In November 2002, a twin-engine Piper Seminole 27 plane crashed into Manila Bay minutes after takeoff, killing 39 people. Investigators blamed pilot error.

With reports from AFP and Rafe Pedroso, Inquirer Research

Crash underscores need for open space around Naia

From page A1

the counterpoint."

The Beechcraft Queen Air cargo plane plunged into a cluttered area shortly after takeoff, exploding on impact and causing a fire that gutted a 2,000-square-meter section of other side of an open street.

Eighteen people aboard were killed. The other fourteen, mostly children, were residents who died in the inferno that destroyed 20 semidouble dwellings, according to Barangay Mayor Florentino Hernandez.

Three injuries were still looking into the cause of the crash on Saturday, but most a week or Barbie Living subdivision that still worked of burning airplane parts yesterday.

As the story least, the crash could serve as an "eye opener" to policymakers to ban trucking plans in Gamboa Naia agencies out of the route composed urban metropolis in Southeast Asia, Gutierrez said.

He was referring to persistent problems in the major air traffic at Naia to Clark International Airport in Pampanga, a former US military air base now

Like Santa

The father of three has added stress to his job in Manila this month, dressing up as Santa Claus to help motorists cruise into the Christmas season.

Out of McKibbin Bar as he presented hardy in the Victoria. Hongkie came to be in the classic Santa suit and long white beard. He calls as a traffic enforcer about a decade ago when he was laid off from his job as a security guard.

Hongkie said he decided to introduce the dance routines in an effort to get motorists to take notice of his traffic violations.

"So I picked up the dance moves of Michael Jackson, and adapted them for my routine," he said.

Most flamboyant

The MMDA employs about 2,000 traffic enforcers, Hongkie is easily the most flamboyant.

With their blue, green, yellow or brown uniforms, enforcers crowd around and beg in between the gaps when there are no perfectly working traffic lights, ready to pounce on any motorists who ignore the signals.

They are supposed to help out when traffic lights fail, or when personnel hands wanes arise unpredictable.

But because some roads are so densely packed and slow moving, vehicles often get caught by the red light in the middle of an intersection, causing the enforcers have to take over the chaotic-and-manage-ment.

Hazards of the job

MMDA spokesperson Aldo Quiambao said that enforcers are being exposed to horrible pollution, traffic enforcers sometimes fall victim to "road rage" partly because they have the power to issue violation tickets with fines for traffic violations.

At least four traffic assistants have been wounded in gun attacks by drivers since September last.

In a country where unlicensed firearms proliferate and where rights groups complain of a culture of impunity, Dimbar said more attacks were likely.

"Other committees have been panicked and anybody abusive, sometimes that could have turned worse," Dimbar said.

Showing appreciation

Hongkie said his dance routines were precisely meant to relieve such tensions.

And entertained commuters often show their appreciation by tossing their loose change, giving his bottom and gas candies to put to oncoming traffic.

Others take the time to stop at a mall to buy him food and other cash donations that augment his measly take-home pay that wouldn't be more than P7,000.

"He dances for us while we're stuck in traffic," said Reynaldo Ricto, a bus driver. "We always follow his traffic commands."

There are cons, however, who capitalize the law. Just recently, one Hongkie encountered.

Sometimes I get sick from being under the sun for long, so I'll get out from the rain, but I always tell my family that is my own small way. I am doing my part to improve the country by getting people to smile." With a report from AFP

Santa Claus lifts mood in horrific traffic

From page A1

people during their shopping, with the Christmas and then.

Real holidays a few days away.

Despite that, Mr. Aquino "remains traffic rules. (At is) not light; the President's orders is at all times," Lacierda said, referring to the "no-wang-wang," or no-siren policy, that Mr. Aquino imposed early in his presidency.

Lacierda said the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) was "doing all it can to make sure traffic would flow as smoothly as possible."

"I would like to ask for the patience of the public," Lacierda said. "But having said that, it does not take away our obligation to ensure a better flow of traffic and we will ask the MMDA to make sure of that."

Highway

Traffic enforcer Ramon Hongkie a during his job in his own way—he does it with a smile and a little help from Michael Jackson.

Hongkie dons the diminutive 55-year-old stands in the middle of one of Metro Manila's busiest intersections, and to the cacophony of roaring engines, puts on an elaborate dance show as his deftly golden traffic flow.

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With reports from AFP and Rafe Pedroso, Inquirer Research

The President's bullying of the Supreme Court

From page A1

is done according to an impeachment principle in obtaining justice...due process.

Dangerous showdown

Over the past few days, the bare campaign has swiftly accelerated into dangerous showdown between the President and the court on the brink of a point of an erosion where it have become a demand for the humiliation or unconditional surrender of the Supreme Court.

In one of the recent statements issued by Malacañang, the President was reported to have claimed that God was on his side to his battle against corruption and he accountability.

Please, let us not involve God in these unclear statements of flawed politicians. Let us not mix public debate over the controversial methods and actions of Mr. Aquino in his fights with the Supreme Court and the previous government with super science over this claimed mandate of heaven.

How this mandate was transmitted is something intriguing—through hearing voices from above?

This piece will not waste time recapitulating details of the last week's confrontations leading to the humiliation of Corona at the justice summit.

It is sufficient to summarize that the conflict was sparked by the midnight appointment of Corona as Chief Justice by then President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in violation of the Constitution's clear mandate. Related to this matter is that the court was packed by her appointees before she retired.

Exercise of superior powers

The court packing led to a series of decisions, most of which were favorable to Arroyo in cases involving her. This issue came to a head when the court issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) on a Department of Justice hold-departure on allowing Arroyo to travel abroad for medical treatment, and the subsequent refusal by the department to obey the TRO, provoking a cutoff-allout standoff.

The administration, Corona and Arroyo's lawyers have more than simply argued their point. They, the court is not prepared to examine and pass judgment on the contending arguments.

The purpose of this piece is to point out the exercise of the superior powers of the presidency in its showdown with the Supreme Court.

During the showdown, the Aquino supporters pursued his conflict against the court. The confrontation demonstrated beyond doubt the dangers of the awesome concentration of powers in the hands of the President, Mr. Aquino.

He is deploying the full weight of these powers to crush Corona and the entire court and to weaken its independence.

Legal concerns

The issue that has caused concerns among legal circles is the independence of the judiciary from political authority.

Many in these circles have warned publicly that the independence of the court should not be compromised by the short-term policy goals of the administration and its concerns over possible obstruction by an unfriendly court.

The President has denounced that in pursuing his political objectives, he was cited past officials is jail to account for past misdeeds.

In his relentless attacks, he has acted like a raging bull, going any object on its path.

Corona is fully aware that the Supreme Court is the powerful component in our constitutional system of checks and balances.

He knows he cannot fight the President face with fire, and in knowing his limitations, all he could do is deflect subtly the blows coming from someone on the campaign.

By hook or by crook

It appears that the purpose of the President's onslaught is to get rid of Corona by hook or by crook so he can reorganize the high court with his own appointees and to have a tribunal more compliant to his narrow political objectives.

There are three ways to remove Corona: first, shame and humiliate him to resign. It is unlikely Corona will step down without a fight.

The administration applied this pressure tactic to Arroyo's Ombudsman, Merceditas Gutierrez, who resigned after she was impeached by the House and before she was tried by the Senate. The success of this breakneeding appeared to have emboldened Mr. Aquino to try it on Corona.

But there are other Arroyo appointees in the court. What will the President do with them, or will he try to oust them out to have control of the court?

Impeachment

The second option of a constitutional removal is to impeach Corona. This procedure is messy and entails obstacles in Congress.

The President may get the House, surely the allies of his Liberal Party to impeach Corona, but the Senate, which is the impeachment court, is a hard nut to crack. Its core is dependence from the executive will be at stake, should Corona be impeached.

The third option is to harass the courts to storm the high court and drag out Corona and others suspected pro-Arroyo justices with another "people power" show of force. This is what the hysterical lynch mob to the streets are clamoring for.

Can they muster a rage to expose Corona with another people power comparable to one that toppled Joseph Estrada's presidency? This method could provoke a real people power uprising in the streets that could invite armed intervention in extreme public order.

In such rule, nobody is safe from lynching and watching the de-genders in the lynch mob calling for summary justice to those targeted for removal or prosecution by the "strong national" regime.

Maybe, it is prudent for the honorable and vigilantes to think a little more about the consequences of a real revolution.

We can't always use Ethan Lee as a model to bail us out of a constitutional crisis.

Sorsogon general new military chief

DELLOSA

Dellosa becomes the 43rd chief of staff of the 150,000-strong military in a formal change of command ceremony in Camp Aguinaldo today.

Malacañang delivered announcing the incoming AFP chief of staff (CSAFP) he due itself of the turnover ceremony, keeping most of those in the AFP in suspense.

When Sr. Supt. appointed Brig. Gen. Ricardo Tanzil in July 2010 and Obay on March 7, Malacañang made the announcement before the formal ceremony.

A decorated Army Scout Ranger officer, Dellosa is a recipient of numerous awards topped by a Distinguished Service Star, two Distinguished Conduct Medals, two Gold Cross Medals, 29 Military Merit Medals, six Bronze Cross Medal, Long Service Medal, Marksmanship Badge Expert and Outstanding Achievement Medal.

Dellosa was appointed chief of Sedcom, which is based in Camp Aguinaldo Quezon in Taguig City, on July 22. As Sedcom chief, he commands all the military forces in northern and central areas of Luzon.

Before that, he was the commander of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division based in Tuang, Tuao, that was responsible for the capture of top New People's Army commander, Teso Alcantara, on July 20, 2010.

He also served as deputy commander of the AFP Central Command based in Cebu City, among his many command posts.

Special commander

From 1988 to 1992, Dellosa was group commander of the special reaction unit of the Presidential Security Group that defended Malacañang from a series of deadly coup d'etats.

He later became junior aide-de-camp to then President Corazon Aquino. The democracy icon took him as personal escort on several occasions, including her peace pact with the Cordillera People's Liberation Army on Mt. Data in 1987.

Dellosa served as commanding officer of the 56th and 54th Scout Rangers (SR) Company, commandant of the SR Training School and commander of Task Group "Darabar" from 1990 to 1993. He was commander of the 1st SR battalion in Basilan from 1997 to 1999.

As deputy task force commander and operations officer of Joint Task Force "Comet," he implemented "Oplan Daybreak" that led to the rescue of Dorothea Ann Abu Sayaf hostile and the killing of Sabaya.

According to an officer, Dellosa sees "no victory" when the enemy suffers fatalities because in the aftermath, the killings "do more harm than good."

The officer said Dellosa believed that using arms should be the last resort of any soldier. "He's a soldier of peace," the officer said.

From 2004 to 2007, Dellosa was the chief of staff of the 4th Infantry Division.

Then he served as deputy commander of the First Scout Ranger Regiment and concurrently group commander of special Task Group Sulu that was instrumental in the neutralization of Abu Sayaf leader Abu Sabaran in January 2007.

Dellosa was trained the PMA commandant of cadets in August 2007.

He underwent extensive military training as an infantry officer, artillery, armor officer, scuba diver, hostage rescuer, Scout Ranger and in airborne and amphibious operations.

First assignment

After graduation from the PMA, Dellosa was assigned in Jolo, Sulu, where he fought Moro rebels for three years and earned the coveted Outstanding Achievement Award for Military Operations awarded by the PMA Alumni Association in 1988.

Dellosa was born in Sorsogon on Jan. 23, 1957, but grew up in Quezon City.

Obay will step down a day ahead of his mandatory retirement on Dec. 13.

Only the fifth Air Force general to be the AFP chief of staff, Obay assumed office on March 7 at the height of the pullout scandal that exposed multimillion peso deals fixed and signed by former top military officials.

He vowed to stamp out corruption in the military and made fiscal and logistics reforms the cornerstone of his term. He also promised to hold himself and all officials accountable for the proper use of funds in light of allegations that funds were diverted for ranch gifts or payback of retiring top officials.

His focus was on reforms, peace, intelligence and morale and welfare.

Conversion

In a recent interview, Obay said he stopped the practice of "conversion" in which funds meant for certain supplies that have allowed to be converted to cash for operations.

Asked if Obay would be appointed as a government post, Mr. Aquino's spokesperson, Edwin Lacierda, said he had not asked the President about it but acknowledged that Obay had "served very well" and he was "still young."

"One of the biggest contributions of General Obay was being able to push through reforms in the AFP especially in the use of their budget," Lacierda said in an interview over state radio dzRB.

He also cited Obay's "emphasis" on accountability and transparency in his nine-month stint as chief of staff which was "consistent with the President's line."

"But certainly his contributions to the AFP are very important, especially as a time when there was a scandal that preceded him. I saw his leadership that allowed the AFP to recover its standing among the public," Lacierda said. *With reports from Dy Yap and Cathe Noriega in Manila; Ana Roa, Inquirer Research, and Yolanda Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Open records of Marcos' spy agency, Enrile urges

By Cathy Yarmain

MANILA Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile yesterday urged the government to make public the records of the defunct National Intelligence and Security Authority (NISA) because these would provide more interesting details about the Marcos dictatorship, including the so-called Rimonda Central Bank.

Enrile said a list of projects then, including Project Lamitan (Cayetano) that housed no the Rimonda Central Bank," Enrile, the martial law administration, said in an interview.

He said that then dictator Ferdinand Marcos ordered to buy all the dollars available in the market and to send them to an account in a bank in Hong Kong. "These funds were used to prop up the Philippine economy that time," he said.

The Philippine government resorted to dollar rationing in the early 1980s amid a crushing debt crisis that followed the assassination of opponent Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

The underground dollar market, based in Binondo, Manila, became one of the sources of much-needed green backs for the government. (See "In the Know" on this page.)

Enrile, the defense minister during martial law, said that the account in Hong Kong had yet to be liquidated. "I just don't know who is supposed to do that. The President (ex-Bobby Ongpin is in charge then together with General Ver," he said.

Roberto "Bobby" Ongpin was then the trade minister, and Fabian Ver the chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

A day after the Inquirer ran a banner story on the handover of the second batch of martial law documents by the Department of National Defense (DND) to the Commission on Human Rights, Enrile said he wanted Nisa records on Project Lamitan turned over to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

While Enrile welcomed the move of the DND to declassify 30-year-old records of the Intelligence Services of the AFP, he recalled that the Nisa had "wider coverage" and mentioned Project Lamitan to illustrate the scope of its surveillance powers during the Marcos regime.

The Nisa and the Civil Intelligence and Security Agency were replaced with the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency in 1987, a year after the Marcos regime fell.

Only Ongpin knew

Enrile said he learned that it was only Ongpin, "who knew of the bank account in Hong Kong."

The Senate President recalled that other government officials who were involved in some way in the project were the governor general bank and probably the internal revenue and customs commissioners.

"But I don't recall that they included the secretary of finance. The Nisa also involved the Department of Justice and even the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The report on the Philippine Coconut Authority with Nisa because the embezzlement men of Project Lamitan was Silas under General Ver reporting directly to the President," Enrile said.

While Enrile claimed memories of the Project Lamitan, he clarified that he did not know of its details and that he had no plans of asking his personnel to resurrect it still for a probe. "The (Benigno) General ng Pilipinas) should be the one to investigate that," he said.

Senate probe

Ongpin is now the subject of a Senate investigation of insider trading in connection with the buying and selling of Philex Mining shares to Manuel V. Pangilinan.

Ongpin, who advises his classmate Jose Miguel Arroyo, husband of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, is also accused of receiving P660 million in bribes from forex case accused Dr. Jaime Dichaves in connection with the development bank of the Philippines (DBP) which he used to buy DBP's Philex shares in 2009.

Asked whether Project Lamitan was involved in the economy, Enrile said: "I don't know if it was."

But Marcos' defense minister apparently took the memories of the martial law records as an opportunity to say the records straight about the accusations of his office at the time.

"Because everyone is talking now and most of the (testimonies against martial law are) concentrated on the defense department. That's not true. I have kept records of everything that transpired during my time there," he said.

Enrile said opening the Nisa records would let no one point an accusing the martial law period. Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and formally lifted it in 1981.

"The Nisa was involved in the intelligence production of the AFP Nisa's intelligence production were directly to the President ... They should open the records of Nisa. If they can open the records of the military, why not Nisa? Just so we'd know," he said.

The Senate President said that he himself was interested in the work of the Nisa because it was "outside of my department."

IN THE KNOW

THE 30-CALLED Rimonda Central Bank (RCB) referred to a group of major monetary measures organized in November 1982 to provide badly needed dollars to importers, exporters and large corporations that acquired raw materials and services from abroad.

At the time, banks and financial institutions had scarce foreign reserves to draw on due to crippling debt crisis that followed the assassination of Benigno Aquino Jr.

Relying on the entrenched network of Chinese-Filipino businessmen, the government organized the RCB under then Trade Secretary Roberto S. Ongpin, with a mandate to close the gap between the official banking rate for the US dollar and the black market rate.

The official guiding rate jumped from P8 to P14 after the Aquino assassination, but the black market rate went as high as P25 as investors panicked and dollar scarcity dried up fast.

The RCB, through its network of small money changer nationwide reportedly came up with $7 million to $8 million a day.

The RCB was disbanded on Feb. 26, 1986, right after the Edsa People Power Revolution that toppled the Marcos dictatorship. At that time, the dollar rate was estimated to at P22 from P25 at the height of the crisis.

In July 2007, government prosecutors charged Ongpin with acquiring P1,609,724 illegally through the RCB and asked the Sandiganbayan to order Ongpin to return the money and pay P38 billion in treble damages and P1 billion in exemplary damages.

Also named defendants were the estate of Marcos, his widow Imelda R. Marcos, former Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Fabian C. Ver, and Ver's children Irwin, Wynlee and Paoul Ver, Helena Ver-Tanenco and Stella Ilustre-Lucero.

The government alleged that the Marcos couple, Ver, Ongpin and several others organized the RCB "to engage in the buying of millions of US dollars and bringing the same out of the country for deposit in foreign banks, thereby obtaining millions of dollars for themselves."

They allegedly received the money through dummies, nominees and agents of the RCB's financiers, "to exchange for security and promissory given to said financiers, their representatives, and vouchers and agents."

Government lawyers completed the marking of their exhibits in 2011, while Ongpin completed his presentation of evidence in June 2007.

In April 2000, Ongpin asked the Sandiganbayan to dismiss the case, saying the government had failed to prove that he had personally profited from the operation of the RCB or that such had caused grave and irreparable damage to the government.

He also claimed the RCB helped stem an economic disaster by undermining the plunging peso.

In December 2009, Ongpin filed a motion asking the Sandiganbayan to finally resolve the forfeiture case against him. *Inquirer Research-Internet, Inquirer Archives*

Musicians hold rights concert for political prisoners

By Pocholo Concepcion
Entertainment

JESS Santiago is 61, but he never tires supporting the cause of the oppressed.

The revered stage songwriter was among dozens of musicians and theater actors who performed in "Bilibid: Pamato in Kalayaan ng Mga Desaparecidos Pulitikal"—a multimedia event held on Saturday night at Areza Point Bar in Quezon City on the occasion of Human Rights Day.

The crowd loved the riot and humor of the lyrics in "Dili in Da Pilipinas," Santiago's satirical ode to the cultural and social quirks of his native land.

He told the audience to keep on singing, a subtle message on the power of music to enlighten minds while being entertained.

Bellen, Cubing Cabrera of the band Dom's Tribe—accompanied on acoustic guitar by Sonny Reyes, secretary general of Bayan Muna—read verses written by Reuben Abaya, a poet-songwriter and former University of the Philippines (UP) Collegian editor in chief.

Abaya is currently detained in a jail at Calbayog City in Samar on charges of illegal possession of explosives.

Actor Soliman Cruz was up next, playing a military officer discussing with his subordinates the fate of detainees they had locked up in jail. Blaming their woes of the detainees were from UP use of Cruz's stern quipped: "Bawa nga UP, ide-bomba!"

Alberto member from an all-women group followed, the song's lyrics ringing loud and clear on the urgency of letting the innocently jailed go free.

Personal testimony

Former Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo gave a personal testimony on his experience of being a political detainee, proudly declaring that he committed no crime against his country and that he is a free man because the charges filed against him were baseless.

He read a poem and ended with the words cry, "Free all political prisoners!"

Ocampo's contemporaries and a student play were also presented, along with videos of Ayanna and others in jail.

"Pulitika" was first staged on Sept. 30 at Leandro Alejandro Hall in UP Diliman, Quezon City.

"We got good feedback and there were suggestions to take it outside the campus," said Donna Dionisio, director of the show. "We're doing this to raise public awareness on the plight of all political prisoners in the country ... I'm personally involved because I want to see Ericson Acosta to be free again."

Dionisio and Acosta are members of UP Alay Kilusang, a campus-based cultural organization.

Outstanding student

"I never expected my son Ericson to be jailed," Imelda Acosta told The Inquirer. The eldest Acosta, 59, is convinced that Ericson—the youngest of two siblings—was an outstanding student from elementary to college.

"He was born to Mathematics and English, and also excelled in art in grade school at St. Mary's College in Quezon City. He was president of the student council and was in the debating team in high school at University of Santo Tomas. He loved to write and finished political science in UP."

He sat in treasurer of the charges filed against him, the elder Acosta stressed, adding that Ericson is a peace-loving person. "What I know is he loved to help the poor especially children where he taught to read and write. He was also concerned with protecting the environment. My son is a good person."

The last time he went to see his son, the father recalled that Ericson told him in Filipino: "Daddy, you put me through college ... You're old but I can't help you now. Sorry."

Probable cause

But what the elder Acosta gets worried about is that he had learned that the court found probable cause in his son's case. He issued a plea to President Aquino: "I beg him to free Ericson and all political detainees."

Judy Taguiwalo, a professor of management and former board of regents member of UP Diliman, said that the issue of political prisoners was reflected in the country's history, where the likes of Teodoro Sora and Jose Rizal suffered the same fate.

Also present at the "Pulitika" event were Dingay Jamalnen, the elder of two siblings of detained National Democratic Front peace consultant Alan Jazmines, and Lara Wendida-hel of the Elac organization UP Los Ing at Capazan, of which another detainee, Marciano Montajes, is a member.

"Every person is entitled to a fair hearing," Dingay said of his brother. "Look into his case. If it's for the commission of crimes, he should have been given the chance to have his day. I support that. I miss him."

Wendidahel maintained that Montajes was a national worker and was arrested when the latter was arrested "and presented as a New People's Army member."

"Marciano has been in jail for 508 days. It'll be a great Christmas if Pinoy would act and free her and all political detainees charged with common crimes," Wendidahel said.

GUEST band Los Indios Bravos perform a song about love of country and freedom that combines ethnic rhythms and hip hop vocals.

Christmas wish of farmers: Return coco levy fund

Front page A1

"All is not lost," said Danny Carranza, secretary general of Kilusang, a coalition of peasant groups and reform advocacies in the coconut industry.

Carranza noted that workers of Hacienda Luisita had finally secured a favorable court ruling after a half century of legal battles over the dismantling of the huge plantation owned by the Aquino-Cojuangco clan.

"There is still a ray of hope that the farmers' justice will also be granted to millions of coconut farmers," said Carranza, whose organization is among those seeking the return to the farmers funds from the levy imposed during the martial law years that were used to acquire shares of stocks in San Miguel Corp. (SMC).

The holdings—28 percent designated as SMC stocks said to be in Cojuangco's name and 27 percent tagged as CIIF shares after non-owned companies set up under the Coconut Industry Investment Fund—were sequestered after the ouster of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986.

In a ruling in April denounced by a dissenting justice as the "joke of the century," the high court gave Cojuangco the 20-percent block of SMC shares.

But the ownership of the CIIF-SMC shares remains to be decided by the high tribunal although it had ruled that it was prima facie publicly owned. There is every reason Cojuangco the 20-percent block of SMC shares.

But the ownership of the CIIF-SMC shares remains to be decided by the high tribunal although it had ruled that it was prima facie publicly owned. There is every reason Cojuangco the 20-percent block of SMC shares.

"We appeal to the Supreme Court to reverse its decision granting 20 percent of San Miguel shares to Mr. Cojuangco and also decide the fate of the other 27 percent shares in favor of the coconut farmers. That is every coconut Filipinos gift that the justices can give to the farmers," Danny Fernandez, Kilusang spokesperson, said on Sunday.

Fernandez also asked Cojuangco, the SMC chair and a major constituent to Mr. Aquino's presidential campaign last year, to refrain from contesting a second motion for reconsideration of the court's April decision and yield the shares to the farmers.

"Not everything in this world is about money, Mr. Cojuangco. Open your heart this Christmas and hear the plea of the millions of coconut farmers for justice to return the coco levy fund to them," Fernandez said.

Plea to P-Noy

Carranza appealed to Mr. Aquino to publicly declare his support for coconut farmers seeking the return of the levy fund.

"If President Aquino wants to bring joy to the country's coconut farmers this Christmas, his administration should now boldly declare the government's resolve in bring justice to the farmers by supporting their fight for the return of the levy fund," Carranza said.

"To complete his Christmas gift package, President Aquino should also lay down the government's comprehensive program to rehabilitate the ailing coconut industry and to end the trafficking of the farmers using the coco levy fund."

The 3.3 million coconut farmers are among the poorest of the poor in the Philippines, studies have shown.

Two weeks ago, more than 300 coconut farmers from Quezon joined the Church people and activists groups staged a 300-kilometer march from Lucena City to Manila to demonstrate their demand the return of the coco levy fund.

Despite the hardship during the march, the farmers were all in high spirits because of the tremendous and growing support extended to them by the public. They were also able to get the attention of national government officials. They were all victorious," Jaime Geronimo, secretary of the Coalition of Concur Farmers of Quezon, and over the phone on Sunday.

Shares worth P300B

Marcos had imposed the levy, which at one point reached as high as P15.00 per 100 kilograms, from 1973 to 1982. Quezon was believed as to be the biggest contributor to the fund.

Court records showed that proceeds from the tax on farmers, a type of copra by the Philippine Coconut Authority, Coconut Planters Bank, were used to acquire 51 percent of SMC shares in 1983...51 percent of which were subsequently conveyed into crony names.

Nilwed at P2 billion then, the block of shares was estimated to be worth around P300 billion now.

In December 2001, the Supreme Court declared the coco levy funds "prima facie (apparently) public funds," but left the Sandiganbayan to determine the owners of the assets acquired with the funds.

In May 2008, the Sandiganbayan awarded the 27-percent block of CIIF-SMC shares to the government, which holds it in trust for the country's coconut farmers.

In April however, the Supreme Court affirmed a 2007 decision of the Sandiganbayan and declared that the 20-percent block of shares in SMC held by Cojuangco, which control between himself were sold to bought using the coco levy fund, was his "exclusive property."

The motion for reconsideration filed by coconut farmers group on the 20-percent block of shares was not only denied but was opposed by the high tribunal. A second motion for reconsideration was filed by farmers groups and the Presidential Commission on Good Government last month.

Late SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Makeredeo
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

More Sports on A29 to A32

BOXING: Mexico's Jorge Arce (right) throws a punch at Thailand's Pongsaklek Wonjongkam during their WBC flyweight title fight in Macau on Saturday. Arce won by a unanimous decision. AFP PHOTO

Ginebra drubs TNT, seals clash with ROS

By Marc A. Reyes

GINEBRA continued its impressive ways, thumping Talk 'N Text for the second straight time, 96-82, to secure a playoff berth in the Philippine Cup at the Smart Araneta Coliseum.

Mark Caguioa scored 18 points, and seven rebounds and six assists, and Mike Cortez clinched the Player of the Game plum for the third straight game in the Gin Kings' second up-set win in as many days.

Ginebra (5-4) will face the No. 1 spot and sealed a best-of-three series with Talk 'N Text.

The Elasto Painters suffer clipped Alaska, 91-85, to also finish with a 5-3 tally but dropped to No. 3 in the standings because of an inferior quotient.

Ille Petter Blanco was the other team with the same record but earned third seeding and a clash with Meralco in a separate race in one affair that also starts Friday.

With the loss, the Tropang Texters dropped to No. 2 and drew Ginebra in Barako Bull, the No. 7 seed which Talk 'N Text needs to defeat just once to advance to the Final Four.

B-Liong, which won its last eight eliminations round games, topped the first phase with a 10-4 record like the Texters and will battle young Powerade.

The Texters and the Llamados clash with their losers ranked foes on Wednesday.

"It's going to be tough," Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen said of his ties with Yeng Guiao and the Elasto Painters. "They have us (in the tournament by one point) and they have become a pretty good team.

"We will try to figure them (Painters) out in the next few days.

Arizona Gaeta led the Texters with 14 points and Jared Dillinger had 13 like Kelly Williams and Harvey Carey.

The scores:

First game:

Talk 'N Text (96) – Gaeta 14, Dyquiah 14, Dillinger 13, Cruz 10, Ramos 10, Jose 8, Ciriaco 8, Asaro 6, Reinhard 2, Castro 0, Ong 0, Lao 0.

Alaska (85) – Thoss 21, Jawara 17, Jose 12, Dyke 11, Lyon 6, Custodio 5, Soto 3, Salvacion 2, Fonacier 2, Fuculan 0.

Quarters: 16-23; 43-45; 73-68; 96-85.

Second game:

Ginebra (96) – Caguioa 18, Ildefonso 15, Wilson 13, Cortez 13, Ayaay 11, Ahhuwalia 10, Helterbrand 6, Ilagan 4, Mallari 2, Tiongson 0, Ferrer 0, Ong 0.

Barako Bull (82) – Cahilig 19, Belga 15, Ilagan 12, Ebona 11, Cuntapay 9, Ferrer 6, Ramirez 5, Ilustre 4, Gamalinda 1, Ilustre 0, Hernandez 0, Dela Cruz 0.

Quarters: 20-20; 43-41; 69-61; 96-82.

Boom Boom KOs Mexican

IT WAS lit from the sweet science, but Jhe "Boom Boom" Bacolod's ninth round stoppage of Miguel Angel Mendoza of Mexico Saturday night was a brutal thriller.

Throwing caution to the winds, Bacolod engaged the Mexican knockout specialist to wild exchanges and eventually proved that he's the heavier puncher to the delight of a capacity crowd at the Bocaue Bosse in Lapu-Lapu City.

Bacolod's confidence grew when he caught Mendoza with snappy short lefts and dropped the stunned Mexican twice in the first round, according to a Philboxing report.

Ignoring blood flowing from his nose, Mendoza launched a furious assault in the second and had Bacolod, one of Ajo Promotions' star fighters, reeling two times in the round.

BALUTISTA

The protagonists continued trading punches in the third, leaving Mendoza with a gash on the left eyelid while Bacolod's face began to turn red.

A low blow saw Mendoza to the canvas in the fourth and he was given time to recuperate. He kept up his assault in the fifth, but Bacolod got the better of the exchanges, targeting the red, which soon became swollen.

Mendoza finally was struck into a left hook and was counted out by referee Lawyer Danny Tapabasa, 1 minute and 20 seconds into the ninth round.

The 24-year-old Bacolod raised his record to 22 wins (16 by KO) against two losses. Mendoza, on the other hand, lost for the first time after knocking out his first 17 opponents. Ray Lauron

Donald makes history in Dubai World C'ship

DUBAI—Ita. Leonard Luke Donald has made history in becoming the first golfer to win both the American and European money titles.

The 34-year-old Englishman, who won the American money title earlier this year, won the European version on Sunday after his closest rival, U.S. Open champion Rory McIlroy, failed to win the Dubai World Championship. McIlroy needed the victory to overtake the rival but finished the tournament at 9-under and two behind clubhouse leader Robert Rock.

The golfers are still on the course including Donald, who was in a tie for third at 14-under for the tournament after the 16th hole. Alvaro Quiros of Spain leads at 17-under with four holes to play.

On Saturday, McIlroy said the fight was over.

"Luke is in a great position and he's played great the past couple of days. I expect him to go out and shoot another very solid round tomorrow (Sunday) and wrap things up," McIlroy said.

McIlroy needed to win the tournament and Donald must finish outside the top nine for any chance of overtaking him for the European money title.

Donald opened on Saturday with a birdie on a hole he had bogeyed the first two days, and then had three more birdies on the front nine. He cleared down on the back nine but birdied two of the last four holes.

"Fished up the birdies when I had opportunities and really took full advantage of all those opportunities," he said. "It was a solid round of golf but it certainly wasn't perfect." AP

LUKE! Donald follows a shot on the third day of the Dubai World Golf Championship. —

Khan loses WBA, IBF belts

NAS BOOTON, SC—Britain's Amir Khan lost his WBA super lightweight and IBF light-welterweight titles on Saturday after he was defeated two points and dropped a split decision to American Lamont Peterson.

Referees Joseph Cooper deducted a point from Khan for pushing at the end of the seventh, and a second point in the 12th when Khan hit Peterson on the break. Those deductions proved crucial when the scores were announced, one judge giving the fight 114-111 to Khan, but the other two scoring it 115-112 for Peterson.

"It's like I was up against two people in there," complained Khan. "(Peterson) kept trying to pick me up. He kept coming in with his head, lower and lower every time. He was being effective in pressing, but I was the cleaner fighter all night."

Khan (28-2) saw the early pace with fine flurries and combinations, and scored a knockdown in the first round.

Peterson (30-1-1) landed himself back into the fight by studying his opponent and slugging hard body shots as Khan retreated to the ropes.

"It's a 12-round fight, not a three-round fight," Peterson said. "I wasn't worried when I was knocked down."

Khan got his second wind in the ninth, as the two men exchanged furious blows, but the final three rounds were close, with both men showing the effects of a grueling contest. Reuters

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Search on for 3 Chinese drug suspects, jail guard

BJMP personnel a gambler, says police prober

By Miko Morales

AUTHORITIES have launched a search for three Chinese nationals accused of drug trafficking and the jail guard who helped them escape from the Parañaque City Jail just before dawn on Saturday.

Chief Insp. Enrique Ilo, head of the Parañaque City Police investigation section, said that based on the information they gathered, Jail Officer 1 Raineel Sillanoc was fond of gambling in casinos.

He was also involved in relationships with several women which could explain why he needed money, he added.

According to Ilo, the escaped Chinese detainees—Chan Ying Leo, Chuang Wai Leung and Long Dong—are big-time drug traffickers with the capacity to offer big bribes.

They are accused of selling drugs under Section 5 of Republic Act No. 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act.

Sy was part of the team which arrested the drug suspects earlier this year in a buy-bust operation on India Istreet Avenue in Parañaque City.

The operation led to two more drug busts in Quezon City and San Juan where an estimated P1 billion worth of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) was seized.

A source at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) identified Sillanoc's escape as a well-thought-out plan.

Requesting anonymity because of his lack of authority to speak to media, the BJMP source said that the week before the escape, Sillanoc had been on duty every day—something he did not do before in his eight years as a jail guard.

At around 2 a.m. on Saturday, Sillanoc led two other jail guards on duty, JO1 Jimm Bagalanon and JO2 Jimmy Zapata, dee and "bulalo" (bone marrow soup).

Both men complained of stomach ache and threw up afterwards.

The source who was knowledgeable with the ongoing investigations said that the leftover food had been brought to the National Bureau of Investigation for analysis.

After the two jail guards fell sick, Sillanoc diverted another jail guard to open the control gate so the fourth floor of the facility where the three Chinese were being held.

Sillanoc then took the inmates to the facility's barracks where they took off their yellow detainee T-shirts and put on civilian clothes.

"The jail uniforms were still (in) Sillanoc's cabinet when investigators were there," the source said.

Initial investigation showed that at 3:17 a.m., as recorded in the city jail's closed cir-

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Pinoys attracted to Korean culture, K-pop, Koreanovelas

But majority of Koreans don't trust Filipinos, according to results of study

By DJ Yap

BEYOND kimchi, K-pop and Korean novels, Koreans are becoming a ubiquitous presence in the Philippines with tourist arrivals rumored to reach the one million mark by yearend, up by 30 percent from 2010.

Based on the data gathered by Inquirer Research, the figure would make them the largest group of foreign citizens to ever have landed on the Philippine soil in a single year.

In addition, according to former ambassador to Manila Hye Min Lee, Koreans studying or working in the country now number more than 100,000.

"This is a sign of the strong and growing people-to-people relations between Korea and the Philippines which help promote mutual understanding between us," he said at the 2nd Philippines-Korea Partnership Forum held at the Intercontinental Manila last week.

Of the more 700,000 Koreans visited the Philippines in 2010, ranking Korea as the top tourist arrivals. This year, a million Koreans will be visiting the Philippines, an increase of 38 percent compared to last year," Lee added.

According to him, some 125,000 Koreans are residing in the Philippines, drawn by potential living in the country, English-speaking locals and a trained literacy and culture.

More flights

Airline linkage has also been on an upswing with 150 flights between the Philippines and South Korea on a weekly basis, or more than 20 flights every day, Lee said.

Since 2006, Koreans have been the top visitors to the Philippines, followed by Americans who previously dominated the ranking, and the Japanese government figures showed.

But more than people-to-people exchange, Lee said he was directed by the new deepening "heart-to-heart" relations between the two countries and the Filipinos' growing fondness for Korean popular culture under the so-called Korean wave, or Hallyu.

"More than 700,000 Koreans visited the Philippines in 2010, making

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quirez

Anti-Putin protests spread across Russia

MOSCOW—Over 50,000 people rallied on Saturday in Moscow while thousands more came out across Russia following disputed polls in the biggest ever national show of defiance against strongman Vladimir Putin's 12-year rule.

A crowd chanting "Russia without Putin" marched past tight police cordons to a square set to island in the Moscow river amid anger at alleged vote-rigging to December 4 parliamentary elections won by Vladimir Putin's ruling party.

The polls were seen as a test of Putin's decision to return to the Kremlin for up to 12 more years via a job swap with Medvedev.

Similar scenes were replayed on a smaller scale in the Far East and across the ice-bound Volga of Siberia and the Urals—a sign that Putin's path back to the Kremlin in March polls may be more fraught than it appeared just a week ago.

"Right now there is actually a chance for us to change something in this country," said 44-year-old Anna Shilkarenkova as the demonstration chanted "No to a police state!" and tied the protest movement's white ribbons to their winter jackets.

"We can't have ruled for United Russia," said Shilkarenkova in reference to a party the opposition has branded a gang of "swindlers and thieves".

The biggest show of public anger in Moscow since the turbulent 1990s brought police bosses to order—overheard and seen Reu 50,000—officers onto the streets just six days after United Russia clung onto power with the alleged help of fraud.

But they were the ladies and dads of stable Kremlin workers have joined many to call not only for a new election but also an end to the single-man-aged politics Putin, an ex-KGB agent, introduced on his sudden rise to power in 2000.

"People who have connections to the authorities feel like they can do anything," said 26-year-old Anton Baranov, "billionaires from underground." "I came to support people who want to change this country."

Before just the moment figure at 25,000 for Moscow and detained 30 people during a 15,000-strong rally in brief Pushkin where both Putin and Medvedev cast their ballots.

AP DASHES march on Dec. 10 through the Bolshoi Moskvoretsky bridge in Moscow protesting against alleged vote rigging in Russia's parliamentary elections.

President Dmitry Medvedev grew up.

But organizers and opposition lawmakers estimated the Moscow gathering at 50,000-80,000—with some saying more than 100,000 had come out in a display of people's power never before seen in the Putin era.

They also called for repeat demonstrations on December 24 should the poll results not be annulled.

"This is probably the last chance we get of changing anything," said 23-year-old Ilya Ponomarev as he held up signs with others on Saint Petersburg's Pryoomlaya Pholnal square.

The rolling rallies kicked off in Far Eastern hubs such as Khabarovsk where around 40 people were detained during an unauthorized rally attended by some 400 people to mass 15 degree Celsius 10to degree Fahrenheit) chills.

Organizers also reported 5,000 showing up in the thriving industrial town of Cherkyabinsk and up to 4,000 in the nearby Urals Mountains city of Yekaterinburg while similar rallies were also recorded in Western Siberia and the south.

Even Russians living in New York demonstrated in support of those protesting in their homeland.

About 200 people gathered outside the Russian consulate in Manhattan to demand a re-run of the election and Putin's departure.

"Putin thieves!" they chanted and "Russia without Putin!"

Considering that anti-Putin protests among New York's large Russian immigrant community rarely involve more than a dozen people, participants said the relatively large turnout was significant.

Organizers said expatriates also protested in European cities including London, as well as in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Moscow and dozens of other cities. AFP

MATT Nkoana- Mashabane

UN climate talks agree on legal pact on global warming

DURBAN—UN climate change talks agreed on a pact on Saturday that for the first time would force all the biggest polluters to take action to stem the pace of global warming.

The deal follows years of failed attempts to impose legally-binding, international curbs on emerging giants, such as China and India, as well as rich nations like the United States.

The agreement would lead directly accepted formal targets under a first phase of the Kyoto Protocol, which runs out at the end of next year, although Washington never ratified its commitment.

The package of deals struck Kyoto, whose first phase of cuts expires at the end of 2012, begins negotiations for a new legally binding treaty to be decided by 2015 and to come into force by 2020. It also creates a Green Climate Fund to help poor nations tackle global warming.

After days of committee-room and debate, the chairwoman of the United Nations climate talks hailed the four separate accords that made up the package of deals.

"We came here with plan A, and we have concluded this meeting with plan A to save our planet for the future of our children and our grandchildren so to come," South African Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane said.

"We have made history," she said, bringing the thinning down on more than two weeks of sometimes fractious talks in the South African port of Durban. The longest in two decades of UN climate talks.

Britain's Energy and Climate Secretary Chris Huhne said the result was "a great success for European diplomacy."

"We've managed to bring the major emitters like the US, India and China into a roadmap which will ensure an ever-increasing global deal," he said.

The European Union pushed hard for strong wording on legal force in the final agreement, in the face of opposition from the world's three biggest emitters—the United States, China and India—weakened the deal.

"We think that we had the right strategy, we think that it worked," EU Climate Commissioner Connie Hedegaard said. "The big thing is that all big economies, now all parties have to commit to the future to be legal way and that's what we came here for." Reuters

Young immigrant kills self, spurs emotional debate in US

MISSION, Texas—On the last night of his life, Joaquin Luna Jr., 18, filled the pages of a spiral notebook with good-byes. In brief letters to relatives, friends and teachers, he asked one of his brothers to take care of his nephews and his sister and told a friend he had left a comment for her in his Bible.

Our lives were different from the rest. It was addressed to Jesus Christ, and in it he asked for forgiveness. "Jesus," he wrote, "I've realized that I have no chance in becoming a civil engineer the way I've always dreamed of here... so I'm planning on going to you and helping you construct the new temple in heaven."

In the days since Luna took his own life last month and came under fire from conservatives in public, his story—of an illegal immigrant who suddenly let hope of becoming the first in his family to go to college—has evoked less sympathy now.

To the immigrant rights movement in Texas, Luna has become a symbol of the pure, ideological toll that being in the country illegally can take on young people. To others, he has become a political pawn, with his death being used by those who support the passage of the Dream Act, which would provide a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants who go to college.

Still others have questioned what role, if any, Luna's immigration status played in his suicide. Although his relatives say it was, Although his relatives say it was, the police concluded suicide because of the pressure he felt, none of the letters mentioned his illegal status. In his letter to Jesus, he suggested that another issue was troubling him, saying he was "fearful to fall in my temptation," though he did not elaborate.

But beyond the concern for his death, Luna's suicide has had an impact far past the border towns of the Rio Grande Valley. It has given other illegal immigrants the courage to speak out about their own deportation.

Luna also thrust a less-innocent family of immigrants into the national spotlight and put a troubled teenager's final letters at the center of the immigration debate, with relatives, activists, politicians and reporters dissecting their wording evidence for or against the family's claims.

Luna's family, a loving young man who played golf, ate in church lunch and helped care for his diabetic mother since the border in Hidalgo County, out of the poorest counties in America, where 35.2 percent of the population lived below the poverty level in 2009.

In recent weeks, administrators at the school and several people close to Luna said he had given no indication that anything was wrong. But on Nov. 29, the day after Thanksgiving, he got out a pistol and, in a few short seconds, ended his life.

A doctor was reported to be among the team of Panamanian officials seizing the 77-year-old ex-dictator back to Panama.

"He was very impatient, very happy. He's going home," one of his French lawyers, Antoine Lory, said by telephone on Saturday night, a day after his last visit with Noriega.

But many Panamanians will want to see the man who stole elections and dispatched squads of thugs to beat opponents bloody to the streets to pay his debt at home.

"Noriega was responsible for the invasion and those who died in the operation. He dishonored his uniform, there was barely a shot and he went off to hide. We want pay," said Mallory Greene, 61, a member of the ex-U.S. Noriega opposition who was detained and beaten by the strongman's thugs in 1989.

Though other El conflicts have long since pushed him from the spotlight, the 1989 invasion that ousted Noriega was one of the most fiercely debated events of the Cold War's waning years.

Noriega began working with US intelligence when he was a student at a military academy in Peru, and Everett Ellis Briggs, the United States ambassador to Panama from 1982 to 1986.

As he rose in the Panamanian military during the 1970s and 1980s, Noriega cooperated closely with the CIA, helping the US combat leftist movements in Latin America by providing information and logistical help. He also acted as a back channel for US commanders dealing with increasingly governments such as Cuba's.

But Noriega was playing a double game. He also began working with Colombian Medellin drug cartel, and made millions moving cocaine to the United States. AP

WERE YOU ABLE TO SEE THIS?
A flame is silhouette during a lunar eclipse over Beijing on Dec. 10. AFP/EPA

India hunger striker demands action on graft

NEW DELHI—A popular anti-corruption crusader who pushed the Indian government with street protests and the threat of another fast-to-death demand for a tough law on graft are not quickly said.

Dressed in a crisp white kurta, muslin and cap, the Inspector-Anti Gandhian campaigner Anna Hazare said "Had Mother India" as he arrived at the Jantar Mantar observatory, a traditional meeting point for political dissenters in Delhi.

The turnout at Sunday's protest is seen as a barometer of support for the 74-year-old, who threatens to campaign against the already tarnished government in elections in India's most populous state over a year.

In August, Hazare stopped eating for 12 days, drawing the backing of millions of Indians and forcing the government to agree to create a tough new anti-corruption ombudsman to investigate graft in public office.

But Hazare's hunger has been tarnished by accusations of ill-conceived intolerance among his top aides, which he denies.

Hundreds of people with the Indian flag in hand and wearing "I am Anna" caps, sang patriotic songs in Hindi as they marched the venue of the strike on Sunday after pausing at independence hero Mahatma Gandhi's memorial.

"Our government takes our money through taxes, through bribes and uses that again to buy votes. How can my grandchildren later say that they are proud to be Indians?" said 76-year-old M.L. Kapoor at the protest site.

Organizers said they expected 5,000 people to show up later in the day, for a speech by Hazare.

Hazare has threatened an indefinite hunger strike later this month, using a bill in parliament to create the watchdog does not have a wide enough mandate to look for corruption by lawmaking bureaucrats and federal police. Reuters

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HOME

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SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

PET SOCIETY Herbal Soap
Use regularly for glamorous tresses
Love them tender
PET SOCIETY Shampoo w/ Herbs
Use every 4 days. Glamorous combed after 4 consecutive lathings
No Toxicity Anti-Dandruff Formula

BRIAN Viloria (right) lands a right to Giovani Segura's chastened and disfigured head late in the seventh round of their WBO flyweight championship fight at Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig

Viloria stops Segura in 8th

Keeps WBO flyweight crown

By Ray Guevara

BRIAN Viloria delivered his punishes in torrents to defense Giovani Segura's power shots and the Filipino-American went on to retain his World Boxing Organization flyweight crown with an eighth-round stoppage at Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig City yesterday.

Valery of the Mexican's lethal body shots, Viloria brought the fight to the middle of the ring where he exploited his superior technical skills and faster hands to expose chinks on Segura's defensive armor.

Segura's right temple started to swell from a series of hooks and straights as early as the second round even as Viloria, also known as the Hawaiian Punch, sustained a cut in the left eyebrow from a right straight by the fighter nicknamed Sonic Patrick.

It was all Viloria from there on as repeatedly jarred the former world light flyweight titlist with combinations, particularly early in the fourth round when he sneaked in a right straight and a left hook to the delight of the crowd of about 5,000.

By the seventh round, the swelling had grown to the point where Segura's right eye was a slit, although the Mexican bravely stayed on his feet and fought Viloria mainly with upper cuts.

Another stinging left hook by Viloria that landed on the lunged-ly tally forced referee Ismael Vitaci to stop the beguiled bout with 29 seconds gone in the eighth, awarding Viloria leaping in jubilation.

The 30th win in his 33 outings was a source of pride for Viloria since the power punching Segura nailed his 9 in the Sing Magsaysay's pound-for-pound list.

"It (victory) means a lot," said Viloria, who won unanimous decisions during his prolight conference in over his own round. "It proves what I am capable of doing, for me it's a big accomplishment."

And it means big bucks, too.

Gary Gittenhohn, Viloria's manager, said more lucrative fights are on the horizon following his team's impressive avenging of his gain, who was subdued off in Medical City winning a head and shoulder, for routine checkup and, more likely, to help endure the swelling on his head.

Bathed off as Viloria's probable foe by said February next year are World Boxing Association champion Yuriorkis Gamboa, Puerto Boxing Council titlist Hozyaldek Mandjukoua, Jose Calderon and even Segura whom sweat left to 28 wins (24 knockouts), 2 losses and 1 draw.

Viloria, who gave credit to his new head trainer, Ruben Gomez, and his wife Erika for drawing the best out of him, said the win looked relatively easy because he was in good shape, trained hard, and followed the game plan to go off the ropes.

"I saw the punches coming and they were slower than what I expected," said Viloria, adding that he felt Segura was ripe for the taking when he landed a body shot in the third round and the Mexican stopped coming forward.

As expected, Segura was a ragging bear right at the start, but Viloria, remembering their wild sparring sessions when they were still amateurs, wisely avoided going toe-to-toe exchange.

Instead, Viloria chose his spots and picked his punches in the flight of his countrymen, who showed his same choice—in the second, the sixth and when the fight ended.

Gomez was all praises for Viloria, saying his word was "very busy" and followed their strategy to the letter. He added they were ready for everything that Segura, whom he described as a counter puncher, would throw.

Viloria is expected to rush into the top 10 of the pound-for-pound list, joining eight-division world champion Manny Pacquiao and fellow 08 Ring Boxing Dominic Ji

Just as impressive was the way his countryman confronted Viloria again. The victory wiped out the

VILORIA /A30

PBA in Late Sports on A23

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Macasieb & De Guzman: Fastest Man & Woman in Timex 226 Bohol Triathlon

The 1st Timex 226 Iron distance Triathlon was inaugurated recently, and playing host to this first-ever event is Anda, the 3rd District of Bohol. More than its famous hills, Bohol has centuries old natural wonders, familiar only to its locals. This dreamy landscape was the perfect setting for this record-breaking race that Filipino athletes could only dream of experiencing. Until there was the Timex Bohol 226 event. Full iron distance triathletes were only staged abroad. Now that there is any shortage of Filipinos who were up to the challenge, bringing it to Philippine shores opens up a flood of opportunities for them to meet in this tough competition and be on the same league as other international athletes.

Times salutes the 226 Bohol Triathlon Winners:

1st Place Overall Male category - Ireland Macasieb (28:38:57), 2nd Place - August Bernadino (30:17:30) and 3rd Place - Franklin Pelliciosa, Times TMM (30:18:52). 1st Place Overall Female category - Laarni De Guzman, Times TMM (34:28:31), 2nd Place - Janice Taliada, Times TMM (34:30:58) and 3rd Place - Ting Jonas, Bike King (35:39:52).

Mabuhay to the Filipino athletes' winning spirit!

Anda White Beach: Marks the start of the swim race, its beauty comparable to that of Boracay's.

Swim: Leg Separation: Clear water, Scenic and Fishes. Participants needed to remind themselves that they had to focus on the task.

Bohol Blue sands beyond the 80 brave men and women who entered participants, most of them first timers.

Times TMM's Jon Fontanos finished half an hour ahead of team-mate's Luis Berlongar. But she decided to wait for Luis and together they crossed the finish line as Venerable signalled the culmination of the 11-hour race.

Over-All Women's Champ Laarni De Guzman-Amores using Energizer LSG lamp which was proper dry before the 4.8km run leg.

Times 226 Bohol Triathlon Organizer Paul Guevara of Bike King and generous event host Rying, Art Yap.

PLDT PLDT SME Nation supports the Timex 226 Bohol Triathlon and the Bike King Team

Stags seek Champs League crown vs Eagles today

By Jacinto W. Paye

THE TWICE-to-beat advantage has befallen today's over four-time UAAP champion Ateneo in the Philippine Collegiate Champions League in the title playoff decree's semis enough for Stags coach Topex Robinson.

After sipping Ateneo in the semifinals, four-bid host hopes to duplicate the trick in today's Finals with the Stags hoping to become the first NCAA team to rule the unbeatable varsity tournament.

Gametime is at 4 p.m. at the PhilSports Arena V-Area in San Juan.

"That kind of tournament is more of a survival game," said Robinson. "More than the physical toughness, it's the mental toughness that's important."

Robinson said he doesn't want his Stags to get too confident after their thrilling semifinal triumph over the Eagles, 70-69, where they rallied from 12-point down in the last six minutes last week.

"Hopefully we can come up with the same intensity and aggressiveness against Ateneo," said Robinson.

MEN'S TEN-BALL POOL (Day 2 of 4 days)
Live — Univ. of Mindoro, San Jose (Occidental, Mindoro)
4 p.m. — San Sebastian vs. Ateneo (Finals)

San Beda and University of Cebu dispute third place in the opener at 2 p.m.

Ateneo coach Norman Black said the Eagles need to hold up their defense against Collin Ahuevo and Jun Jose getting two of the Stags' top trio, is there a winner-take-all showdown this Thursday.

"For Stags had to do without Ronald Pascual early in the semifinals after the double-shooting veteran tore his anterior cruciate ligament (ACL).

"We know San Sebastian will be tough to beat," said Black. "They've just beaten us. We have to do something defensively."

The Eagles are going for a title-3 straight crown in the tournament only four UAAP teams have ruled since its inception in 2003.

Powered by the trio of Greg Slaughter, Kiefer Ravena and Nico Salva, the Eagles wrapped up their semifinal run by downing back-to-back MAAC champion San Beda, 70-63, last Friday to earn a rubber crack at the Stags.

Both Ateneo and San Sebastian finished the round-robin Final Four with identical 2-1 records, but the Stags claimed the No. 1 seed by virtue of their twice-to-beat incentive, due to the winner-over the-other rule.

"We are the defending champions so we really want to win," said Black. "At the same time, it has been a long season. We've been playing since the end of March, so it's like the light at the end of the tunnel is in this year is renowned."

Manila archers, Laguna tankers steal limelight

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MEGA CITY — Manila archers Bianca Rivera-Chua Imbuzan and Luis Gabriel Moreno were right on target even as Laguna swimmers Carbajtcha Bendaid and Antares Bienvenu notched two more gold medals yesterday in the Batang Pinoy 2011 at the Marvin Nagat sports complex.

Bolasco, a 14-year-old freshman from the Intramural School, prevailed in the girls' double Pin 16-meter individual and the Olympic Round to bolster her chances of becoming the youngest Olympian for the country in next year's London Games.

"It's hard to maintain my feelings right now. But I'm very thankful to my coaches and to my coaches for the support and understanding," said Gonzales, who had 553 points in the 10m display and then beat Cebu Mission in the Olympic round final, 6-2.

Moreno, who bagged the overall number-1 spot with five to this year's Philippine National Games in Bacolod, ruled the boys' double Pin 10m individual (556) and the Olympic round by outshooting Asif Ibtisam Mata, 7-2.

A grandson of veteran actor and TV host Rustom Moreno, he scored a perfect 10 points in the final end of the 20-arrow duration.

But there was no stopping the two Laguna swimmers who both missed their golden haul in this week.

Not only the 13-year-old Bendaid and Bienvenu, 15, set in the finish out of the meet the most outstanding athlete which displays a valedictorian at the St. Hilarion's College in London and tickets to the London Games next year.

Bendaid, the pool wonder from San Pedro shinning and the Palaro MVP for the past two years, dominated the girls' 12-13 100-meter freestyle and 200m butterfly Hermia, a high school sophomore at Rizal College, ruled the girls' 14-15 200m freestyle and 50m backstroke.

They garnered three golds each during the first day of competition last Saturday.

In track and field, John Noel Rianta, who almost failed to make it here due to lack of transportation money, scored his second gold, this time in the boys' triple jump with a leap of 12.53m. Last Saturday he won the long jump despite coming here just one hour before the competition ended.

Jessica Salazar also nailed a second gold in triathlon as she anchored a Laguna quartet that also included Gene Elbert Pagsisi, Elizabeth Garcia and Jamie Miguel Hizon in the mixed relay race.

The next event had the four athletes alternately competing in the 250m swim, 30 Mile and 1.2K run. Salazar assumed the individual phase in her division after the first leg.

After sailing victories in athletics were Baguio City's Agustina Augustyniak in the girls' discus throw (26.61m) and Gary Santiago in the boys' javelin (41.25m). Francis Mhel Arabilla of Aurora ruled the boys' 1,500m (4:20.61) rounds.

Meanwhile, volleyball Mica Rose suffered a concussion after a foul fall Saturday night at their blocking session and had to be rushed to the hospital. She was later discharged after going through an x-ray procedure through the support of Senator Chiz Escudero, a company owned by Philippine Sailing Association president Lauren Ercon.

MEMBERS of triathlon's champion team from Laguna (middle) and PSC commissioner Chito Loyzaga (second from left) and triathlon chief Ben Carrasco (right). Below, Laguna's Jessica Salazar races away from the transition area.

Lady Eagles welcome back Gorayeb with easy win

ATENEO reclaimed back coach Roger Gorayeb as the Lady Eagles overwhelmed National University, 25-13, 25-10, 25-10, to grab a share of second place in the UAAP women's volleyball tournament at the MOA Pavilion Wednesday in San Juan.

Bel Gervacio added four service aces to a 13-point performance and rookie Alyssa Valdez had 11 hits which improved Gorayeb, who sustained injuries from a motorcycle mishap in the San Beda campus and had to skip last week's match where the Lady Eagles absorbed their first loss in four outings against defending champion La Salle.

"[Valdez] stepped up," said Gorayeb. "We have a long way to go in the tournament. I know she has more to show."

University of Santo Tomas, meanwhile, rose from a set down to outlast University of the Philippines, 22-25, 25-15, 25-15, 25-16, for a 2-2 record.

Aliaka Orea fired 16 hits and Mara Rebecca added 14 points, including four blocks, to go with 12 digs.

"We still need a leader," said UST coach Odjie Manzon. "We looked disorganized inside the court, so tomorrow has to step up."

In the men's division, Far Eastern University stayed unscathed with a five-setter against NU, 22-25, 25-21, 23-25, 24-26, 15-9, to stay on bottom in four matches.

RR Labrador posted a tournament-high 20 hits for the Tamaraws, who also gained a first win on the Bulldogs after a separate 3-0 bout.

Carlo Rivera and Philip Gervacio combined for 31 points in La Salle's 25-18, 25-15, 25-23, 27-25 victory over Adamson in the other men's match.

The Archers improved to 2-2, while the Falcons dropped to 1-3. Jacinto W. Paye

SMART PLDT chair and chief weightlifting supporter Manny V. Pangilinan (left) and PWA president Monico Puentevella flank fifth-ranked Mexican Cristobal and Hidilyn Diaz and coach Antonio Agonoy.

Big chance for lifters to nail Olympic slots

BEIJING Olympian Hidilyn Diaz and Asian Youth and Junior gold medalist Nestor Colonia may just make it to the London Olympics after their impressive showing at the recent World Weightlifting Championships in Paris.

Diaz, now ranked seventh in the world in the 53-kilogram category, only needs to perform creditably in the last qualifying round in April next year in South Korea to make her second Olympics.

The last qualifier will determine the final list of competitors for the London Olympics.

Colonia is now ranked 13th in the world in the 56-kg class after his performances in Paris and must improve on his lift in Paris in the Korean qualifier to also land a berth in London.

The International Weightlifting Federation reportedly wants only the world's top 10 lifters in each class to vie in the Games.

The participation in Paris of the two lifters plus three youth teenage athletes it was made possible by the Philippine Sports Commission and the ABS-CBN Sports Foundation, which has also adopted weightlifting as one of its focused sports.

Diaz took the silver medal in the 58-kg category in the recent Southeast Asian Games in Palembang, Indonesia.

Philippine Weightlifting Association head Monico Puentevella said he is optimistic of the lifters' chances in the qualifiers.

"If Lady Luck smiles on us in Korea, weightlifting may just have one or more lifters in the London Olympics," he said.

Viloria: Never give up!

ONE GAME AT A TIME
Sev Sarmenta

BOY the ish man. Rocky emerged on BRO over the last two weeks.

From the definitive first fifth that erased the aesthetic of the endless season of torpedo that interrupted to surprise the magic of the original, fight and movie fans reconnected with a knockout never gave up on anyone the odds.

It's the classic images of Rocky at the steps in Philadelphia, punching the air instead of refusing to huddle despite being in a disadvantage against Apollo Creed or Mason Dixon that have hooked at through the years.

And the inspiring Bill Conn scene that every boxer has seen had to, every screen has played it like or his MP3 player and this every team has played to evoke a sense.

There's also a love story, and I love stories connected that Rocky and Adrian are seeing Boston's cocoa endearing romantic pairs.

Rocky's journey as a hero is in simplest form a about his effort to achieve to provide himself and his family a better life.

Stallone, who had a hiccup the idea of almost half his head, could not put up any more dollymen and had to be stopped from concentrating by relieved Samuel Wexler 39 seconds into the eighth round.

You could actually hear the Rocky Theme Island sing in your mind as joyful, grandiose music broke out from the Viloria corner and us right into the middle of the ring.

"Sweep when up," Viloria exuberantly proclaimed during his postfight interview with analyst Mike Ochoa, invoking a Rockyesque quality in his journey as a fighter.

Viloria has overcome adversity and doubt so many times. Like Rocky, he too rises anew and the possibility of greater fights loom large again for this fighter that Filipinos consider their very own.

It is never easy being a Filipino fighter in the Mayweather Dimpidon era where the Thrilla's shadow is huge and encompassing. But Viloria is his own man, capable of unloading awesome power from a lithe frame.

When he is in his element, he can create magic with one hand if his opponent doesn't accept him as different from Pacquiao but as a champion of their own, never below.

At least thirty during the fight, the second-round-only-stunned "Ya ha ha! Si ha ha!" sobers the Hawaiian-Dutch ordained to be a champion.

Unlike in Rocky, the spotted chance came spontaneously and not from a script or a director's cue. It was an affirmation that never giving up had its just rewards.

Viloria stops Segura in 8th round

From page A19

memory of his fiddup against Carlos Tamayo in their IBF light flyweight tussle last year at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay.

In another hard-fought contest by the IBF towards super featherweight title, Mexican Sheilla Montero won by split decision over Thai Pithoni Sakkreerin.

Al Jaimapun, who bore a resemblance to Pacquiao, punished Jessel Gallajon, who was unable to continue in the fourth round, to keep the Fine Pacific light weight championship.

A panel panelist stating the Viloria-fight, Jimmy Lim, who was accompanied by wife Judeny, and two-time world champion Jerry Belmonte, said Viloria did very well.

He added that Viloria shouldn't stop training to sustain his role in the ring historically.

Viloria, who grew up four generations in small, was aboard on all fours judges' scorecards when the fight was called off.

Another sportsman in the Viloria-Segura throwdown was Milan Melindo, one of the Pilipinos' top fighters in Cebu. Melindo is ranked in the top 10 among flyweights in the major sanctioning bodies, the WBA, WBC, IBF, WBO and the International Boxing Federation.

Lack of cash delays POC training center plan

By Jove Navarro

UNTIL a new training center is built, the national athletes will have to make do with the old training facility in Baguio City being maintained by the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC).

"Since it would take time and money to just up a new training center, we agreed to develop the sports facility in Baguio City first," said Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. after a recent meeting with President Aquino.

While Cojuangco said the President agreed to his proposal to build an exclusive training center for athletes in Clark Field, Pampanga, the project contained in the planning stage due to financial concerns.

Cojuangco said they would begin training sports like taekwondo, archery, shooting and other combat disciplines from the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Manila and the Philsports Complex in Pasig City in high altitude Baguio.

"We can make arrangements with the schools there [in Baguio]," said Cojuangco. "The athletes will be encouraged to divide their time for school and training."

The POC maintains a track oval and several dormitories for athletes and coaches inside the Teachers Camp in Baguio City. Boxers and track and field athletes train there year-round.

In his meeting with the President, Cojuangco said he pointed out that the countries which excel in sports have state-of-the-art facilities to nurture their athletes.

"All the leaders in sports here in Asia have a training center of their own," said Cojuangco, referring to Olympic powerhouse China, South Korea and Japan.

"Besides the training center, all the needs of the athletes will be addressed to keep them sharp and competitive for international competitions," said Cojuangco.

UNSURE FUTURE Yao Ming (left) and Shaquille O'Neal (right) of the Shanghai Sharks are unsure if they will be back next season. AFP

Lakers send Odom to Mavs

LA may part ways with Gasol

LOS ANGELES—The Lakers made a trade Saturday, but it wasn't the Chris Paul or Dwight Howard.

Two days after getting rebuffed by the NBA in an apparent deal for Paul, the Lakers sent forward Lamar Odom to Dallas for the Mavericks' first-round pick in the 2012 amateur draft.

"It's a done deal," said a person familiar with the situation who was not authorized to speak publicly.

The Mavericks might also send the Lakers another unspecified draft pick. It was not immediately clear if the move was a straight salary dump or a circuitous effort to try to get Howard down the road in free likely 2012.

Next year's draft is considered deep.

The Lakers lost depth in the front court. Odom, 32, was the sixth man of the year last season after averaging 14.4 points and 10.7 rebounds. He is owed $8.9 million this season and $8.2 million next season.

Odom didn't report to practice at the Lakers' training complex on Saturday.

Ron Artest worked out with his longtime trainer/coach at what's turning into an awkward training camp for new coach Mike Brown.

Guard Jeff Green unanimously beat out Ingelsbee for left the training complex for maybe the final time...or maybe just the final time until Sunday.

"It's not been easy," Gasol said. "Mentally and emotionally it's a hard situation to deal with because the situation is out of your control."

The first time All-Star is the centerpiece of the Lakers' pursuit of Paul, New Orleans' superior point guard. The reigning MVP would have sent Gasol to Houston and Odom to the Hornets.

"If the NBA hadn't stepped it, I would be gone," Gasol said. "I wouldn't be here. So happy it hasn't happened because my heart is here, my mind is here. I want to be here."

Kobe Bryant has remained publicly neutral about the Lakers' decision, neither endorsing a potential deal for Paul nor expressing support for Gasol and Odom.

When asked if Gasol's presence was endorsed Saturday, Kobe scanned up the weekend with his typical brevity: "Nope."

In another development, Tyson Chandler has joined the New York Knicks from Dallas, bolstering that joining up with Carmelo Anthony and Amare Stoudemire his chance of competing for championships.

Chandler gets a four-year contract worth about $56 million after a three-team deal.

The Knicks sent Timmy Batal and cash to the Washington Wizards and reserve guard Andy Rautins to the Mavericks, and there were other picks involved. AP,USA Today

Gems battle Waves for solo D-League lead

Francia	10	1
Cardona	6	1
Chacon	6	1
M.Ely	6	1
Jones	6	1
Rosario	4	1
Ramos	4	1
Tiongson	4	1
Cabagnot	4	1
Tolentino	4	1
Cortez	4	1

SERIES STORY
Gilas Junior Cagers
vs Pr. Gilmore
Lady Warriors Push
vs Taiwanese Amateurs

By Jeannine W. Pajo

CEBUANA Lhuillier shares for the sole lead against unpredictable Boracay Paws in the PBA D-League Aspirants Cup today at the San Juan Gym.

Although starved of at least a quarterfinal berth with a 6-1 card, the Gems hope to further boost their outright semifinal feel in the 4 p.m. duel against the Waves, who are in the middle of the pack at 4-3.

The Cebu boast a solid lineup led by Vic Manuel, but coach Luigi Trillo said the Waves remain as one of the unpredictable teams in the league.

"You never know what to expect with coach Lawrence [Chongson]," said Trillo. "He can zone, man or trap. My concern is that they are a very good fast-breaking team. They [scorers teams with] their tenacity on defense."

Cafe Pilotas, holding a 2-5 record, tries to lift its own quarterfinal hopes against the winless PC Gilmore at 2 p.m.

Trillo expects the Gems to do better at the boards with the 6-from-7 duo of Roland Valoza and Raymond Almazan back in their corner.

"We are to control Boracay Paws, we need to win the rebounding department," said Trillo as the Gems try to extend their winning run to four.

Ezra, the Filipino-Belgian team owner Bert Maglana and get his reinforcement from the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, while Almazan missed the Gems' last three games as he suited up for Letran.

The Waves, sharing fifth spot with the title Pacific Pipes, also mounts to the rescuing for the quarterfinal berths.

Only the top two teams at the end of the eliminations will go straight to the semifinals, while the third and fourth places will earn the series-to-four advantage in the quarterfinal playoffs.

PCA Open: Arcilla makes it six; Capadocia scores

By Cedrik F. Pajos

TOP seed Johnny Arcilla clinched his sixth Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) Open men's title in 10 years by walloping newcomer Antonio Mendoza, 6-1, 6-0, 6-4, yesterday at the PCA indoor clay courts.

Breaking behind an array of groundstrokes, the 20-year-old Arcilla totally snuffed out hopes of an upset by Mendoza, who muscled up the breakfast with a morning win over second seed Elbert Amarao in the second round.

"I seemed to finish it off early because I knew I didn't have the advantage if the match went on because he's younger and had more stamina," Arcilla said in Filipino.

Sharing the limelight with Arcilla was fellow Jaro Capadocia, who rallied past top-seed and fellow Southeast Asian Games campaigner Dexter Pantoncito, 2-6, 6-4, 6-3, in the women's finals of the tournament presented by Cebuana Lhuillier.

In a battle between members of the team that topped the bronze in the SEA Games in Jakarta, Capadocia found her rhythm after losing the first set and went on to complete the upset win in two hours and 10 minutes.

Arcilla asserted himself early winning 12 of the first 13 games, then banked a hurting groin in the third set on his way to topping the 20th edition of the most prestigious local tournament and the P500,000 champion's purse.

ARCILLA

CAPADOCIA

The straight-set win added to Arcilla's victories in 2001, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Arcilla actually pulled off a victory double as he joined forces with Patrick John Tierro to take the men's doubles title at the expense of Amarao and Edmund Jones, 6-4, 6-2.

"I wasn't able to master my spell, but I took advantage in the second and third sets because she was a little impatient with the long rallies," said the 30-year-old Capadocia, a senior at Ateneo High School, who collected P50,000 for her feat.

Pantoncito consoled herself with the women's doubles title, teaming up with Jennifer Nguyen to top the tandem of Lorraine Ngan and Aileen Bugay, 6-1, 6-1. Cedrik F. Pajos

Resma, Sunga top PSC netfest

TEEN seed Rosanne Resma topped her impressive campaign with a 6-1, 6-3, 6-1 triumph over second seed Ma. Angela Sunga yesterday to capture the girls' Under-18 crown in the second PSC-Philta age group tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Resma, who gained a crack at the crown with a walkover win over No. 1 Marian Capadocia in the semi-battled semifinal round, held her ground in the decider, coming up with clutch points to frustrate Sunga and claim the crown and 200 ranking points.

She also foiled Sunga's bid for a victory double after the latter scored a 1-0 (DQ) win over Capadocia in the final of the premier U-18 division of the week-long event sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission.

The seed Ryllie Mendoza also found tough in the third set to stop Ingrid Nicole Gonzales, 6-4, 3-6, 7-5, and bag the U-14 title in the ranking tournament backed by Dynamic Sports.

Semifinalist Calvin Caslan Herrera came away with a walkover victory over No. 3 Kyle Perpas in the final of the boys' U-16 event while top seed Julian Dupuis stopped Mikko Montemayor's giant-killing run with a 6-3, 6-3 sweep to clinch the boys' U-14 diadem.

Third seed Arthur Panizo dipped Marcus del Rosario, 6-2, 6-0, to claim the boys' U-12 plum.

Philta secretary general Ronnie Magat handed out the trophies and prizes to the winners that included No. 1 Mico Edu and second seed Francesca Angela Santiago. Edu dismantled del Rosario, 6-2, 6-2, to top the Under-10 order while Santiago took the girls' U-12 title with a walkover win over Monica Therese Cruz.

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SPORTS

SEAG discard, Kenyans rule 35th Milo Marathon

By Cudell P. Tupas

FOR THE past six months, Mary Grace Ochoa Saenza has religiously trained in Baguio City in a bid to make it in the national team.

She was bypassed by the Philippine team in the Southeast Asian Games, but her no-nonsense attitude and hard work paid off yesterday as the 33th National Milo Marathon at the SM Mall of Asia grounds.

The 24-year-old from Zamboanga reigned her first national title in the women's 42K division, easily beating a strong field that included SEA Games steeplechaser and two-time champion Jho-ric Hanapeg.

"I was frustrated when I didn't make the SEA Games because I really wanted to represent the country," the lithe-built Saenza said. "It seemed one to-do-a thing to dispute. There is no restriction of food and allowances when you are just part of the training pool."

Motivated by marathon legend Rey Abner, Ochoa Saenza...date the top Filipino finisher in the 2nd Garmin Marathon last September—clocked 2 hours 53 minutes and 7 seconds to win the title with thrusting, finishing in injured leg, finishing 2 minutes and 1 second behind.

Mary Joy Tabal settled for third (3:03:45) while last year's champion Shoukichi Ibobo clocked 3:06:05 for fourth.

Ochoa Saenza said she will use part of her P500,000 prize to buy a parcel of land in her hometown in Zamboanga.

Under overcast skies, Kenyan James Tallam became the first foreigner to win the men's 42K, leading a 1-2-3-4 finish by 40-kilo in a race that will be remembered more for the failure of Filipino big guns like Eduardo Buenavista, Cresencio Salud and Eric Pamque to put up a challenge.

Tallam, a businessman from Eldoret, took the lead at the 30K mark from competitor Willy Bottich en-kiway to clocking 2:28.30.

Bottich secured top second just 27 seconds behind Tallam, while Abraham Mutai (2:29:27) and David Kipsang (2:30:05) finished third and fourth, respectively.

Buenavista, a three-time winner; Pamque, the SEA Games silver medalist; and Commission Salud were present at the starting line but did not finish the race, according to race organizer Hon Debi Cruz.

In short shorter, Iloilo leg champion Jason Agononcillo carried the fight for Filipinos, exciting up 8:06. The 23-year-old from Miag-Ubay finished 2:34:20, Ismael Baquiro was the other Filipino landing to the top 10 in his time of 2:34:28 proved enough for ninth spot.

Best of top 10 in the men's division Rolando Delgado (2:28:29), Bekajilo Mulit (2:29:44), Eliud Sarteg (2:49:31) and Jeaphet Ejimeni (2:30:02).

DELGA SANTOS. Weekend

TISSOT SHOP

PBB Face-Off: Orcollo ends losing streak to Yang

FILIPINO ace master Dennis Orcollo finally exacted revenge on Taiwanese Yang Ching-shun, posting a 8-7 decision in their Philippine Nightlife Billiards Face-Off Saturday night at the Airport Pagcor Casino in Pasadena City.

Again pushed to the wall, Orcollo, the reigning World Pool and Billiard Association Player of the Year, tucked tremendous pressure to win the last two racks and nip Yang for the first time in three meetings on head-said.

Orcollo, 9-ball gold medalist in the recent Southeast Asian Games in Palembang, Indonesia, yielded to Yang, the Iwatsu Asian Games champion, to their 2007 race-to-66 marathon match at the Gateway Mall in Quezon City and again in their 2009 face-off, Series 2-One Mare Time, 30-45, at the Club Cage Exclusive in Tomas Morato also in Quezon City.

"I'm very happy that I've finally won over Ching-shun in the country," said the 31-year-old Orcollo, endorser of Bagay Promotions of Percy Manzano, who pocketed the top prize of $5,000 (about P210,000).

Yang, dubbed as the "Son of Pool," won $2,500.

Future matches

The PBB Face Off series resumes with a match pitting Chong Jung-lin of Chinese-Taipei against Roberto Gomez on Dec. 17.

Chong then tangles with Carlo Biado on Dec. 22, followed by the Efren "Bata" Reyes-Ma Dan-ching of China collision on Dec. 30.

The series, which pits top Filipino cue artists against foreign opponents, is jointly organized by the Mega Sports World and BILLIARD Corp and aired live over Solar Sports, Sky Channel 74 and Destiny Channel 34.

The event is also shown worldwide through the Internet, live streaming at www.mega-sportsworld.com and www.philippinenightlifebilliards.com.

Sponsors Premier sports patron Philip Ejercitado of Midnight Life DJ, brother of Sen. Chiz Escudero, awarded the prizes to Orcollo and Yang.

Also present were BILLIARD Corp. representative Jayero Tin, Airport Pagcor Casino chief manager Edgar Flores and Airport Pagcor Casino senior marketing officer Jobert Barrera.

"I decided to help and be involved in sports, particularly billiards to help Asian players excel worldwide," said Ejercitado.

The PBB Face Off is being supported by Filipinas, Cosmo Sound System Sakura Amplifiers and Horse Theater Systems, Midnight Cafe 69, Diamond Billiard table, Mezmar Sports Bar, Libas, Golden Lead Entertainment, Bagay Promotions and the Billiards Managers and Players Association of the Philippines.

Roy Luceno

DENNIS Orcollo $1,000-a-liter

Alta Vista golfers sweep team events, top Sta. Lucia tourney

DANAO CITY—Alta Vista Golf and Country Club flexed its muscle in the recent 2011 Sta. Lucia Super-Club golf tournament by sweeping all four team competitions in the challenging Bandito Palos Verdes Golf and Country Club.

Boran captured Group 1, Isa Gaspino took Group 2, Hapalioron de Cebu clinched Group 3 and Jupiter topped the seniors division in an overpowering sweep for the Alta Vista players of the 38-hole event.

The inter-club is the simplified version of what used to be a course-hopping race which the real estate giant holds every year for clubs operating under its umbrella.

Members of Sta. Lucia clubs Alta Vista de Cebu, Beverly Place of Pampanga, Calbiga Springs of Laguna, Eagle Ridge of Cavite, Lake Sherwood of Concepcion, Orchard of Cavite, Bayside Tagaytay of Batangas, Sarsuni, Nasi of Batangas and Bandito Palos Verdes took part in the event.

"This competition will hopefully start a series of events that we intend to do for our clubs in the coming years to allow Sta. Lucia club members all over the country to play and interact with each other," said Sta. Lucia Executive Vice President Vincent Sarsua.

Jupiter routed the seniors field by 49 points, Boran was by 16, Isa Gaspino prevailed by just one, and Hapalioron won by two.

SANTOS

Rosalie Tagaytay posted two third place finishes though Floyd Tiojeto in Group 2 and BitCB in Group 3 and another third place output in Group 3. Hilco Wolfoo turns Rosario Verde A and Grace's basket placed second and third in Group 1 aside from D'Builders clocking in third in Group 2 while Eagle Ridge and Orchard got a runner-up trophy in Group 3 (Hanged) and seniors (Young Deer).

The complete team results:

Group 1: Boran (Rosie Soller 43-10, Rita Cleofas 49-10, Rosario Verdeno 85-18, Jaribeo Santos Jr. 89-18, 140-18-122) Forest Hills A 156-16-140, Grace Garden 159-18-141.

Group 2: Isa Gaspino (Mario Gaspino III-18, Richard Jan 38-18, Jose Nuno 45-21, Alberto Rodriguez 45-18) 155-19-136, Bengal 125-18-107, Royal Tagaytay 125-18-107.

Group 3: Hapalioron de Cebu (Bernard Lu 36-21, Jose Lobrinha 44-18, Melvin Nicolas 39-19, Leopoldo Salandanan Jr. 32-18) 86-14-72, Bay 88-16-72, D'Builders 89-16-82.

Seniors: Jupiter (Ely Jacala 44-18, Mauricio Nicolasora 47-18, Victor Nicolas 39-19, Rey Bascuk 49-20) 132-18-102, Young Deer 143-18-213, Jack Cave 92-18-108.

Editor Raul G. Marcelo ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

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Gov't debt burden increases to ₱4.87T

End-September level up 4.4% or P206.6B from a year ago

By Reena F.W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT'S debt stock rose to P4.87 trillion as of September, up P77.3 billion or 1.6 percent from the August level due to the continued weakness of the peso and a net issuance of domestic securities.

With the latest population estimate at 95.6 million, the amount of total outstanding debt would mean that each citizen has a share of P50,956.

The debt stock as of September this year increased by P206.6 billion or 4.4 percent from P4.66 trillion in the same month of 2010.

Investments on the total outstanding debt from the Bureau of the Treasury showed that 57 percent or P2.76 trillion was borrowed from local lenders.

Domestic debt rose P24 billion or 0.9 percent from the P2.76 trillion

(BIZ 1-1)

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■ **Banks' lending rates** continue to decline /B2-1
■ **PH in better position** to deal with foreign debt /B3-6

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Dec. 9, 2011
43.640

STOCK MARKET
Dec. 9, 2011
20.39
PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B3-2)

Stocks seen to consolidate

ADRU the notable uptrend momentum. In contrast, we are continuing to consolidate this week while building a base for a much-awaited year-end rally.

Last week, the main share Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) ended up 1.58 points to finish at 4,295.10, although the net foreign buying in the last few sessions suggested that those expecting a Santa Claus rally would not be disappointed.

"The coming week will be a consolidation period, which should be healthy for us," said Joe Claudio, market strategist of Philequity Investments.

He said the main index would likely trade close to 4,300 and resigned days, he viewed the resistant high of 4,367. On the days that the market would correct, Claudio said the main index would likely pull back to fill the gap close to 4,250.

"It seems that on the technical side, the market is looking for a consolidation or correction. There will be a pegged rally but fundamental analysts would like to see some considerations first. That's why at the

(STORY ON B3)

Ortigas & Co. restructuring to lure investors

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PRIVATELY held Ortigas property group, one of Metro Manila's biggest landlords, has restructured its core unit into a new corporate entity to prepare for either the entry of a new strategic investor or a stock market debut.

Inquirer sources said real tycoon Henry Sy has been the most ardent suitor of the Ortigas group, which has a vast urban landbank in Mandaluyong, San Juan and Quezon City, the most important of which is the 16-hectare Greenhills shopping center.

A spokesperson from Sy's SM group said there were no deal with the Ortigas group but other sources familiar with the matter said there have been on-and-off key to talks since the year when one of the key shareholders, Benita Tantoco, moved to reconcile the deadly-held limited partnership into a corporation that could accept new investors or go to public.

The old holding company Ortigas & Co. Ltd. Partnership has been transformed into a corporation, ORTP Holdings, and is now "pretty much done" with the restructuring, PBMC Philippines president Tony Crispo told the Inquirer last week.

It took some time for the Ortigas partners to decide the corporate route because of the diverse ownership, the old partnership being a very old entity whose shares of stocks have

(ORTIGAS B2)

Report to Stockholders PNOC Exploration Corporation

Unprecedented Success for PNOC-EC In Energy Exploration

44% Rise in Net Income, P5 Billion Dividend to Government More Exploration Projects in Oil, Gas and Coal in Pipeline

The year 2011 is a year of solid and proud achievements for the PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC). These significant achievements promise for not merely and for the company a brighter future, particularly in the pursuit of sustainable development of indigenous petroleum, oil, coal and other energy resources.

In the face of ever heated competition for energy supplies in the globalized world, the attainment of a sustainable and stable energy supply of fuel to drive economic growth and modernization has become more urgent than ever. Hence the success of the mission of PNOC EC, to the country's energy sufficiency and the near-normal Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC), is crucial.

For the occasion of its 35th anniversary this year, PNOC EC reaffirmed its strong commitment to attain not only energy independence but also abundant and stable energy supplies that would catapult our country to assert steady and speedier industrial, agricultural and commercial progress.

Under the administration of President Benigno S. Aquino III, the new board of directors, its chairman, president and chief executive officer took office December 31, 2010, are proud to announce that the PNOC EC has reached unprecedented financial, administrative and operational success.

44% Rise in Net Income

Through the efficient and cooperative efforts of its officers and employees, PNOC EC posted a net income of P605.46 billion for the nine (9) months (January 2011 to end of September, 2011, compared to P421.71 billion for the same period last year or an increase of P183.75 billion, or a hefty 44 percent.

Furthermore, our company has no outstanding financial obligations and has a positive cash balance of P1.7 billion as of October 31, 2011.

Hence we can proudly say that PNOC EC is one of the most viable, most profitable of government and publicly owned corporations.

This can be attributed mainly to the observance of fiscal prudence and the exercise of corporate responsibility by the new administration, with the full cooperation of the rank and file. Consequently, profits from our investment operations rose significantly.

For instance, the total revenue of the Energy Supply Joint Venture (EJV) we are the large of PAPC 01 billion from January to September this year, compared to only P4,000 million for the same period last year, showing an increase of P421.17 billion or an outstanding 987% rise.

This was a result of intensified operations, as well as the adoption of cost-saving policies. In 2011, the facilities of the supply base will be significantly upgraded to further improve its cargo handling operations and capabilities.

Other business units that demonstrated strong performance and generated improved profits were the Malampaya Deepwater Gas Project and the Coal Trading and Energy Services.

As a result of this strong performance, PNOC EC was able to declare and pay dividends amounting to P5 billion this year, the highest on record. From the said amount, P604.997 million was remitted to the National Government, and the remaining P4.995 million was paid to the corporation's public stockholders.

More major Projects on the Pipeline

PNOC EC is optimistic that it can sustain this performance in the succeeding years, considering the bright prospects of projects already in the pipe line and other exploration projects already in the planning mode.

In the coming years, the corporation will intensify its efforts in fulfilling the Company's primary mandate: the exploration of petroleum and coal resources in order to secure a viable and bigger supply of indigenous based energy for our country.

The government-owned corporation continues to conduct exploration activities in the Philippine areas that have been geological identified as petroleum basins and located in various parts of the country. These activities are expected to bring us the total oil or natural gas discoveries that will provide more income to our government and augment our energy supplies.

We are set to fulfill an exploration well in Service Contract 61 East Sabina in the second semester of next year with a budget of close to P600 billion.

At the same time, PNOC EC continues to intensify its efforts in developing the coal industry. It is important to improve coal production to be able to cope with the upward trend in local coal demand.

The engineering and development plans for Leasing area in Cadanglasan, Dingras was completed towards the end of 2011. The Municipal Government approved the implementation of development plans for this coal mine last March 8, 2011, and production is expected to start by the end of 2012. The mine is estimated to hold a coal reserve of at least 1.4 million tons.

The government cannot free will aggressively explore the outstanding areas which have a potential to contribute 1 to 7 million tons of coal. The Board of Directors has approved the implementation of the Lower Bunong development project and Go Sin, Sadanga exploration project with an initial development cost P40.000 million and P60.000 million, respectively, as part of the program to expand the coal mine in Cadanglasan, Mountain.

Coal Resources for Electric Power Plants

The Company has also been responding the Aquino government, through the Department of Energy (DOE), to develop coal resources that would fuel existing and planned power plants to secure the country's energy requirements in the face of the country's tight electricity supply.

PNOC EC will provide material support for the power plants in the provinces of Isabela and Zamboanga Sibugay. These power plants aim to augment the electricity generation in these areas and provinces.

Additionally, this year, PNOC EC allocated P649.000.000 for the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for vehicle project, which is in line with the Department of Energy's existing Natural Gas for Vehicle Program for Metro Manila's (NGVMP).

PNOC EC plans to construct a CNG distribution refueling station including two (2) dispensers and two (2) daughter stations to increase the use of CNG in public utility vehicles. This project seeks to provide natural gas fuel to 1,000 buses by the full implementation of the project.

To attain President Aquino's set goal

In the year ahead, PNOC EC intends to vigorously and earnestly pursue the goal set for it by President Aquino in his historic speech during its 35th anniversary celebration to make a crucial and decisive role in our country's quest for energy independence and sustainability.

With the support of our national administration, the industry and local communities, and together with our valiant men and women of PNOC EC, its partners and stakeholders, the company's directors and officers are confident that PNOC EC will be able to maximize its role in nation building and fully accomplish its mission of energizing the nation.

David leaves PBCom

FORMER Development Bank of the Philippines president Bernardo David has resigned as a director and executive committee chair of Philippine Bank of Communications effective last Friday. Owning up this post in the bank recently bought by the group of former trade minister Roberto V. Ongpin now gives the banker more time to concentrate on the ongoing Senate hearings probing P5B transactions during the term of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

David says he was brought onboard to help Ongpin's group study the acquisition and conduct the due diligence audit on PBCom and that he was not looking at any permanent post in the bank in the first place. "My role is driving," he says.

Under David's term at DBP, the bank's profits hit record levels. But because of his being friends with "PGMA" he has become collateral damage in the search for the suspected financial pipeline leading to Malacañang's former tenants.

Indeed, facing allegations of misleading "federal" loans and insider trading are not exactly what he envisioned his retirement to be. Boots C. Bumidor

Speaking of which ...

BUSINESSMAN Bobby Ongpin and his nephew, Eric Recto, last week executed a joint affidavit in response to Sen. Serge Osmeña's allegations that the former trade minister had engaged in "insider trading" in his deal to acquire shares of Philex Mining Corp. and rail lines in Luzon across Manuel Pangilinan's PLDT.

In their affidavit, the two made it clear at the outset that they "have no quarrel with MVP," despite the tycoon's own affidavit having been geared almost by senators supposedly as rock solid proof of insider trading.

"The Philex transaction was beneficial to (MVP) and to his companies, and also to us, and also including the Development Bank of the Philippines," they said. Ongpin and Recto said that, contrary to senators' allegations, "there is nothing in MVP's affidavit which supports the allegation of insider trading."

"On the contrary, we believe that MVP's affidavit clearly supports our position that there was no insider trading," they added.

The two differed with MVP only on two points. Where MVP said that it was Ongpin's group who contacted him to offer their block of Philex shares, both Ongpin and Recto insisted that it was the telecoms tycoon who contacted them and set up a meeting at the Makati Shangri-La's Business Club to negotiate a deal.

All compelling arguments, of course, but will a turnout in keeping the inside "ingredients" at bay? Probably not. They have non-politicians endpoints in mind. Aurelio L. Lucas

12-year 'ID' window

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has struck what is believed to be a good compromise formula in tightening the rules on independent directorship on all listed, public and mutual fund companies—without watering known from legal luminaries critical of these initiatives, that is.

Under the rules which will take effect on Jan. 2 involving only a formal signing and pro-forma compliance by newspapers of general circulation), independent directors (or "IDs") can serve in the same company for a term of five consecutive years. There will be a cooling-off period of four years before he or she can be reelected for a maximum of five years. After serving out an (10 for IO) years, the ID will be perpetually barred from being reelected anew in the same company.

The IDs are also allowed to run simultaneously seven only in a maximum of five companies within the same conglomerate but there is no limit to directorship in unrelated entities.

But the most crucial compromise is that all previous terms served by existing independent directors will not be counted in the new rules, which means that the tightening will more significantly affect incoming rather than existing independent directors, most of whom would have naturally retired within the next 12 years. Doris C. Dumlao

Azcon campaign in the works

NOT a few Filipinos' attention was caught by a paid notice published in this paper some weeks ago by the heirs of a certain Angel G. Victorio, notifying the public that cases have been filed against Columbia Motors Corp. and subsidiary of Central Property Inc. involving the Jersey project in Pasadena City.

The cases filed with the RTC, Cebu, and are regular courts basically accused Columbia and Century of falsification of documents used to acquire a permit to develop and sell the multi-billion-peso Jersey project, which was endorsed by international celebrity Boris Yeltsin.

The heirs of Victorio have also filed a civil case seeking the segregation of a one-hectare portion of the property, done sign amounting to P37.5 million plus legal interest of 6 per cent a year.

Biz Buzz sources said, however, that the parties—mainly Columbia Motors on land owner and the Victorio heirs—are in the process of forging an amicable settlement that should be announced soon so that the cloud over issues can finally be lifted.

Until then, Azcon buyers can only wait with bated breath. Rina Azcon-Dumlao

Phone orders not counted equal

PRE-ORDERS for the new iPhone 4S seems to have hit fever pitch in recent days, with some officials in Globe Telecom smiling smugly that the company's carried acknowledgment of the new Apple product has been wiped out within the first 24 hours of their online reservation page going live.

The Ayala-controlled firm started taking pre-orders last Dec. 1, along with its rival Smart Communications, which will also offer the iPhone in its shelves for the first time.

According to our sources, Globe will have its usual iPhone launch event on Dec. 16, Friday, at the new Greenbelt 5 mall (as opposed to its usual venue at the courtyard of Tower One along Ayala Ave., on account of the video's more upscale subscribers.

Smart, for its part, will supposedly launch its iPhone 4S line at the "Smart Answers Center" on the same day.

Rumor has it that while Smart made a preemptive strike in announcing the launch of its iPhone line, it won't receive its stock of Apple devices until December. So long after rival Globe has moved out its inventory (perhaps an Apple consultant in its old board room partner?). Business L. Junior

BPO in Megamall

THE SM group will not be left out in the race to feed' up office property portfolio catering to business process outsourcing firms. Recently, the group finished construction of a new podium parking building to complement its existing shopping complex Megamall. This is in preparation for the construction by 2013 of a new BPO building using that open space. Incoming Edsa.

Though the SM line a real land banking along the Manila Bay side, it has to make the most out of the limited property size within the Ortigas central business district.

This could change, of course, if and when "Tanang" Henry Sy (and we're not saying this is a certainty) bags what could be the biggest property deal in the country through a potential partnership with the Ortigas group. Brera C. Dumlao

Got business alerts and a preview of Biz Buzz the morning before it comes out. Text ON BIZBUZZ to 4407 (P2.50/alert).

Ortigas & Co. restructuring

From page B1

been passed on from one generation to another. The Ortigas clan has historic roots dating back to the 300-year Spanish colonial rule.

HSBC, one of the first foreign banks to set up shop in the Philippines, is the single biggest stockholder of OCLP with a stake of 24 per cent in the property unit, Crippa said.

Crippa, who himself sits in the OLCP board, said the property interest has been in HSBC's portfolio for the past 60-70 years. Apart from different family groups within the Ortigas clan, the Catholic Church owns around 9 percent of the holding firm, he added.

"This [restructuring into a corporation] provides all the shareholders with flexibility to take different strategies with respect to their ownership of the shares whether they want to stay with the company or dispose of those shares," Crippa said.

"The reason for going into the corporate route was because we're a bit old. Erm, it provides shareholders the flexibility. You, it allows the company to go on an IPO. So we can take the company public at some point in the future," he said.

Other industry sources said it was HSBC's intention for the property unit to take the corporate route and some private investors have considered joining the bank in a block sale, to unlock the true value for their shares. But previous talks bogged down as some Ortigas family members changed their mind, one source said.

Reports sources said SM group president Henry Sy himself—who built a fortune out of retailing and shopping mall development and who now also owns the largest banking group in the country—is still keen on pursuing a potential deal to invest in the Ortigas property group.

Obviously, discussions about the future is confidential but the 'corporatization' of the entity has made it possible for some interesting potential outcomes—whether it's an IPO or whether it's the involvement of a private investor. There's a lot of conversations as I'm not obviously confirming confidential internal discussions," Crippa said, when asked about SM's interest. "But there's a lot of things going on."

"If [OCLP] is an interesting company with very valuable assets and a huge landbank. The development pipe is very good. The company is very strong. The cash flow is great," Crippa said.

Crippa said under the old structure, it was difficult to leverage even on the group's strong asset base. Under a partnership, it could not be as aggressive [as other developers]. As a family group, they didn't want to take on investors for the fun of it.

Under a limited partnership, general partners team up with one or more limited partners who, in turn, enjoy limited liability as long they do not participate in the control of the business. The general partners under this structure are the ones who carry most liability.

The restructuring of the Ortigas property group, Crippa said, was done not only for HSBC's sake, but for the good of all shareholders and the company itself.

"There's a feeling that going forward, it will become a new entity with public investors from different platforms, local investors, offshore investors. It will become a professional company managing property development and property ownership and lease," Crippa said.

As it is, he noted that the property company had a rich history and a good story in terms of development pipeline.

"Under a professionally run board and corporate structure, investors who may be in the same business themselves can perhaps bring professional directors. That could happen over time," Crippa said.

Stocks seen to consolidate

last few days, despite the net foreign buying, gains haven't been substantial." Claudio said, noting that many technical analysts were selling on rallies expecting to buy back those shares during the consolidation phase.

Separately, he said the first half of December would usually be sanguine while the second half would be averages.

On the external environment, Claudio said developments were still mixed. While the United States seemed to be opening out with a string of positive economic data, he said the European Union was still struggling. "But we don't believe that will be relatively positive."

With the EU, he said it's a matter of finding the right formula to stabilize the situation.

"I don't think they will find the magic formula yet. They are not waiting for that. They will just want to probably find a solution to take away a lot of the concerns of a longer and deeper correction for the market, or a recession," Claudio said. Boris C. Bacudio

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GADGETS Gallery

Supplement to Your Living Revolution

Samsung Apps for TV gains popularity

ONLIVE video applications topped the lists of most downloaded apps today. Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp. said as it announced that Samsung Apps, the world's first application store for television, had already passed the five million download mark globally.

Leading the way was YouTube, which was the most downloaded app globally. Apps that payers shared experiences and bring the family-focused aspects of the television to life have proven most popular to date.

Joining YouTube atop the charts were Hulu Plus (No. 4 Global, No. 1 Latin America and UAE), Blockbuster (No. 6 Global, No. 2 U.S.) and Netflix (No. 9 Global, No. 3 Europe).

Information apps such as Google Maps (No. 2), SocialWatcher (No. 3) and ESPN Today (No. 7) were also featured prominently on the global download rankings.

"It's no surprise that these applications would be at the top of the lists globally and regionally," said Ariel Arao, business unit head of IBPO-AG. "The TV is a family-based device and people want to lean back and enjoy their time in front of the TV. These apps are the entry point for consumers to discover other experiences on their TV like gaming and social networking as well as the limitless possibilities being created by our third party developers."

More than 300 applications designed specifically for TV are currently live in Samsung Apps, with gaming, video and information apps accounting for nearly 60 percent. More telling is how the rate at which Samsung consumers are downloading TV apps has rapidly increased.

After reaching the 2 million download mark in January, less than a year after the February 2010 launch of Samsung Apps, it took just four more months to reach 5 million. Samsung consumers are downloading Apps for their televisions at an average rate of 100,000 apps every four days. Samsung Apps is now available in 120 countries.

Samsung has championed the success of Samsung Apps for television since its launch, holding a series of highly successful developer contests around the world to go with its multi-faceted marketing campaign in support of Smart TV.

Samsung's growing developer community is responsible for many of the top titles in the emerging paid apps category. Heyzaro, for example, which combines a variety of night-sky constellations and sounds of outdoor atmospheres, is the second best-selling paid app in the United States.

"The success of our developers and the savvy at which our consumers have innovated our services show that this new medium of apps designed specifically for the television experience is taking hold in the consumer living room," said Ariel Ao, business advisor at IBPO-AG. "These apps are one of the cornerstones of this overall Smart TV experience and they will continue to grow both in number and the diversity of experiences."

Meet your smartphone's new best friend

PLANTRONICS Marquis HD BT Bluetooth headset

YOUR smartphone has a new best friend. Meet the Plantronics Marquis HD BT, a smarter and smaller headset that offers voice-guided pairing for iPhone and Android™ smartphones, voice recognition so you can answer or ignore calls completely hands-free, and stereo Bluetooth with A2DP (high-fidelity) audio, which allows you to listen to music, GPS directions or your e-mail, all while providing great stereo quality in the smallest, lightest weight design ever at just seven grams.

"Smartphone users want to harness the power of their phones to complement and simplify their busy lives," said Elizabeth Hansen, vice president of marketing, Plantronics. "The Marquis lets them take advantage of the full range of their phone's capabilities, even while talking or listening to music or a podcast, and it's great looking, super lightweight design."

Smartphones have seen impressive growth in the last few years and people have quickly come to depend on the all-in-one device. Whether used as a cell phone, organizer, an e-mail device, or all of the above, having a smartphone is not just smart, it's a necessity.

In fact, IDC tracked shipments of 204.7 million smartphones in 2010, and expects that number to hit 472 million by all of 2015, a compound annual growth rate of 18 percent over 2010. IDC also expects the number of smartphones to grow at a sustained rate of 26 per cent year over through 2015. By then, IDC said 982.2 million smartphones will be shipped by manufacturers to retailers.

Outrageously small and light

The Marquis is Plantronics' smallest headset ever and offers excellent sound quality in an outrageously lightweight design. At seven grams, it weighs less than most half-paper pens. It is so small you'll hardly know you're wearing it.

Get the most from Marquis and your smartphone with the PA Headset370 App, currently available in the Android Market and Apple app store. These apps will do a second check and finish the job with the added functionality of your headset, such as announcing who's much pairing.

Marquis M100 is available for P2,950 in either Jet Black or Arctic White, and will be available by first quarter of 2012.

Tech trends

Get your own personal cloud with My Book Live

GONE, THANKS ago, HD purchased a box and an service to support a portable hard drive product. the leader in storage solutions came out with web-enabled access allowing a WD storage product you've never let that filter around at home via a web link and password.

The first access, however, didn't catch consumers' attention. For one, Internet speed was painfully slow, and the concept of cloud storage was just not practical.

But today, with Internet bandwidth and speeds greatly improved, and with more people now accessing data not just from PCs but from mobile devices, WD decided to re-introduce its cloud service, and in a new improved package.

Here having a "personal cloud" feature, WD's My Book Live drive connects to the home network creating shared storage that access across within and outside the home using mobile devices such as notebook, tablets, and smartphones.

With My Book Live, users can share files, stream media, and access content anywhere with an internet connection to your

Have an Inspiring Christmas

Spread the inspiration this Christmas. Stay connected to your loved ones, wherever they may be. Update your best friend in Cebu or greet your US –based relatives with video call, because keeping in touch has never been this easy. How about inspiring your star student by rewarding him for his efforts or this may be the best time to reward yourself for months of hard work?

Fun and function: The K Series K43U notebooks

Built with you in mind, keep in touch with those who matter most with the new ASUS K Series K43U notebook. The power of VISION Technology from AMD ensure a smoother video calling experience.

Take time to update your loved ones with your latest stories, even a little showbiz chika. Exclusive ASUS IceCool technology keeps the palm rests cool at all times, ensuring an ultra-comfortable experience during all those long hours of catching up.

How about rewarding yourself, for coming up with that creative campaign or for acing those quarterly presentations? Inspire yourself to be even better next year with the fun and functional ASUS K Series notebooks. Make it your own with customized settings and automatic security features.

Work and play with the Eee PC 1215B

The ASUS Eee PC 1215B is perfect for your star students. Show them how much you support their academic endeavors by giving them a fun learning experience.

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The latest AMD Dual-Core E-450 Accelerated Processor is more than capable of keeping up with their multimedia needs.

Reward them further with downtime from their school work, too! Its 8-hour battery life and HD screen lets them watch videos and play games even during your out-of-town holiday or New Year's at grandma's. Take your pick, it comes in red, black and silver.

So why not fire up your new ASUS K Series K43E notebook or Eee PC 1215B and start video calling your cousins in London or your big brother in Italy? With ASUS, you're sure to find ways to inspire (and get inspired) all year round.

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BUSINESS

Atlas Mining: A sleeping giant awakens

'Black hole of money' seeks to reclaim old glory

By Cladel L. Lucas

IT WAS, at one point in the 1980s, the Cleft biggest copper mine in the world.

At its peak, the facility of Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. in Cebu could process 130,000 tons of copper ore in a single day. And because of this, Toledo City—where the bulk of its mines and processing plants are situated—became one of the most progressive business centers in the central Visayas island.

By the early 1990s, however, the company started to feel the brunt of its debt-fueled expansion, including a large yen-denominated loan that took its toll on the mining firm's cash flow.

It was also during this time when militant labor groups began "militantly" the ranks of its workers, resulting in labor troubles for what was then a labor-intensive mining operation.

"There by 1994, rare-major typhoons hit the area, flooding the mines," said Atlas vice president Arthur Ramos. "There were also systemic problems which aggravated [the situation]. It had simply become a black hole of money."

Ramos—a second generation member of the family that was invited to help Atlas when its troubles began two decades ago—is now preaching over what could be one of the most important turnaround stories in the local mining industry.

Debt burden

At the depths of the company's crisis, it was struggling under a debt burden of as much as P9 billion (including a significant amount owed to its labor union), making it difficult to make significant progress in cleaning up its books, regardless of how much ore it mined.

To settle its liabilities to its workers, two of its three facilities were stripped of their equipment, which were sold for scrap, in order to pay union members their back wages.

"Only one concentrator was left operating, and that's what we're using today," Ramos said.

According to Ramos, Mr. Telfer, Atlas's lead at the time of renaming Atlas to the former glory it enjoyed in its heyday (it was founded in 1936 by the Sorianos family).

"He was really dedicated to making this work, no matter the difficulties we faced," he said.

And difficult it was, according to the younger Ramos, their family faced roadblock after roadblock since the 1990s in their bid to revive the mining giant, from issues with creditors and shareholders, to sudden downturns in the world prices of copper, and even the 1997 East Asian financial crisis that saw commodity prices diving and debt levels soaring overnight.

"What we did then—since Atlas had so many problems...was to spin off its assets into various subsidiaries so that we could bring in investors at the asset level," he said, pointing to the company's decision to segregate its nickel and copper operations.

Father's request

Around this time, Ramos—a graduate of the Ateneo School of Management—was in Northwestern University and, back then, working for consulting firm McKinsey & Co.—was asked by his father to return to the country to help oversee Atlas' finances.

"It took a while, but things started happening in 2005," he said, starting with negotiations to settle contentious issues with equity investors (who were eventually bought out).

Atlas was also aided by rising demand for metal, especially from China, which had an insatiable demand for commodities to fuel its booming economy.

Talks with private equity investors also yielded fresh funds, specifically a $46-million injection from Singapore-based Crescent Asia Special Opportunities (Caspi), around $35 million of which was used to rehabilitate the mine's dewatering facilities.

According to Ramos, however, it was not until the 3q family came into the picture in 2009 that Atlas' restructured ferment up, giving the company a fighting chance at recovering its lost position in the industry.

Savior

"BDO [Henry Sy-owned Banco de Oro Universal Bank] saved us," he said, explaining that the bank helped take out expensive loans and provide working capital. What started with a $25-million loan eventually grew to $140 million, allowing Atlas to retire expensive debt that was constricting its cashflow.

By 2010, BDO came to as an equity investor, buying out one equity partner.

"This year owns everything to SMC," he said, adding that the investment—now by family's involvement helped "rejuvenate" Atlas and the entire mining industry as a viable business.

Today, Atlas operates with an ore throughput of as much as 10,000 tons a day from its three sites in Toledo, Cebu. It is still a long way off from its peak of 130,000 tons a day but Ramos believes the goal is within reach in the near future, given plans to make operations more efficient with new equipment.

"The bottom line is important, of course," he said. "But what we really want to do is for Atlas to contribute to the national economy and the development of the area where we operate in."

And while the Philippine mining industry is under attack from critics at the national level, Ramos said that pronouncements was rarely encountered at the local level, where the benefits brought by firms like Atlas are evident to the communities they operate in.

"For one, we're very grateful for the support of the local government," he said. "I think the LGUs, from the provincial level downward, understand the benefits that mining brings."

AERIAL shot of the Atlas mine site in Toledo City, Cebu, showing the plant's copper concentrator where mineral concentrates are processed and produced.

PLDT sees 'rough' year ahead as margins thin

By Paolo G. Montecillo

DOMINANT carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) expects 2012 to be a "rough" year for the telecommunications sector as companies ramp up their spending while profit margins thin.

PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan said the phone firm was expected to meet its revenue and profit goals for 2011, but the coming year would be a different matter.

"It's going to be a tough year for PLDT next year," he told reporters in a recent interview.

Last month, Pangilinan said the company has revised its core net income target to P35 billion for the year, below its previous forecast of P40.5 billion.

This was also lower than the P42 billion in core profit, which excluded one-offsets of foreign exchange movements and other paper gains or losses, that PLDT attained at the end of 2010.

PLDT's core net income from January to September 2011 was 4-percent lower at P30.5 billion than the P32 billion recorded in the same period last year. PLDT expects profits to start growing again by 2012.

The company has experienced declining revenues from its traditional mobile and text messaging services. Although usage levels have gone up, price subsidies to cover network infrastructure, revenues have shrunk due to "bucket" and "unlimited" type offers.

Pangilinan said PLDT would also have to set as provision a substantial amount of profit to make up for the costs of integrating its operations with recently acquired mobile brand Sun Cellular, operated by Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc.

Sun Cellular is the third biggest mobile network in the country with more than 23 million subscribers. "We're still waiting for the final outcome for Digitel. We are provisioning for that," he said, in anticipation of accounting and other non-cash charges.

In a recent report, global debt watcher Fitch Ratings said the Digitel acquisition established PLDT's market dominance. As a result of the merger, PLDT now controls 70 percent of the market in terms of user count and revenues.

Fitch rates PLDT at minimum investment grade, one notch above the Philippines' own sovereign credit rating.

Splash raising ₱1.12B to repay debt, fund food expansion

By Doris C. Dumlao

PERSONAL care products manufacturer Splash Corp. is raising P1.13 billion from the issuance of debt notes to selected institutional investors to boost its diversification into the food business and refinance maturing debts.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange on Friday, Splash said it has signed an agreement on a corporate notes facility with Security Bank Corp., Robinsons Bank and Security Bank Corp. trust division. The arranger of the facility is SB Capital Investment Corp.

In an interview, Splash chair and chief executive Rolando Herrabera said the corporate notes would have a term of five years.

Unlike retail bonds, which are sold through a public offering and must go through a more tedious registration process, corporate notes are a quicker fund-raising option for top-tier corporations as the debt paper are sold to a maximum of 19 selected institutional investors.

Part of the proceeds would be used by Splash to refinance P600 million in five-year fixed rate notes maturing next year, Herrabera said. There would be about P500 million in net proceeds from the fund-raising that would be used to expand the company's foray into the food business in the Philippines and in the United States, he added.

Splash is also beefing up its cash reserves to take advantage of expansion opportunities in Africa, particularly in Nigeria.

The company, which bought an 80-percent stake in the food manufacturing unit of Puerto Rico last September, is upbeat on its long-run cheese business.

"We're getting ready to put up a new plant," Herrabera said.

By next year, Herrabera said the company would spend about P500 million for capital outlay. P200 million would go to the renovation and upgrade of its existing plant in Valenzuela and P300 million for advertising and promotions.

He said the plant in Valenzuela would have to be upraised up to temporarily accommodate food manufacturing operations. But eventually, he said Splash was looking at a new property in Bulacan where it would like to consolidate the manufacturing operations of the personal care and food segment. Herrabera said the firm would invest around P400 million on a new manufacturing plant.

To harness Rolando Fiesta's good distribution capability in the United States, Herrabera said Splash would also like to set up a small-scale manufacturing facility there by next year to be able to sell more products.

He explained that the local food manufacturing unit could cover local demand and likewise sell food mixes in the US but noted that there were regulatory barriers to the export of locally processed mom products like "tocino" and "tinapang" type of fish.

Rolando Fiesta's products range from canned shrimp paste, ready-to-eat canned meals, white vinegar, fish sauce, soy sauce and lechon sauce to fruit preserves and cider or condiments. In keeping with its commitment to home-style cooking, Rolando Fiesta products have no preservatives.

Splash acquired the Rolando Fiesta brand (including the restaurant chain) to capitalize on its strong brand awareness and existing distribution channel overseas, especially in the US. The company aims to use this acquisition as its platform to become a major player in the food industry.

Meanwhile, Herrabera said the Splash group was likewise studying funds to foray into Nigeria. As early as 2007, Splash has signed distribution deals in Nigeria and other West African countries.

He said Splash was now looking to acquire a property in Nigeria worth around $150 million that could be the hub of its operations in the populous African country.

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Banks' lending rates continue to decline

By Michelle V. Remo

7-mo average down to 6.76% from 7.8% a year ago

LENDING rates dropped in the first seven months of the year, as liquidity in the banking system continued to grow.

Monetary officials said that with significant amounts of money in their disposal, banks had more reasons to lend to both individual borrowers and enterprises, and to make loans more attractive through reduced interest rates.

Data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that the average bank lending rate stood at 6.76 percent on all loan facilities in January to July, falling by 1.04 percentage points from 7.8 percent in the same period last year. This was despite moves of the BSP in the first semester to raise its key policy rates, which serve as a guide for commercial rates setting.

Industry players said the banks' appetite for lending was more significant this year. The low interest rate environment encouraged the public to borrow more from banks.

The BSP earlier reported that lending by universal and commercial banks (UBs) grew by about 22 percent in the first three quarters of the year, accelerating from about 10 percent last year, as the growing supply of available money helped banks earn rising demand for loans.

The total loan portfolio of UBs amounted to P2.05 trillion as of end-September this year, up from P2.17 trillion a year ago.

Monetary officials said the low interest rate environment was supportive of economic growth as it prompted individuals and enterprises to borrow more and use the money for consumption and investments.

Despite the faster growth in bank lending, however, the economy still suffered from slower growth so far this year.

Economists blamed this partly on the anemic global demand for goods and services, which resulted in lower export receipts for the Philippines.

They said the economic slowdown could also be attributed to under-spending by the government.

The economy, measured in terms of gross domestic product, grew by a mere 3.6 percent in the first three quarters of the year.

The government said that with the performance in the first nine months, the full-year growth target of between 4.5 and 5.5 percent, which a much slower than last year's growth, might no longer be achieved.

GDP growth stood at 7.6 percent last year, the fastest in more than 30 years.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. last week said the pace of public spending must increase to complement the rise in private sector spending, which was aided by bank lending.

Mindanao co-ops to put up own 300-MW plant

By Amy R. Remo

TWENTY-THREE electric cooperatives belonging to the Association of Mindanao Rural Electric Cooperatives (Amrecs) are planning to develop their own 300-megawatt fuel-based coal-fired power plant to ensure the stability of supply in Mindanao.

Energy Undersecretary Jonathan Perrelos I. Balisi told reporters that electric cooperatives had started taking on a more proactive and upside-out role in providing additional power in Mindanao, whose supply situation had been precarious due to its heavy reliance on the Agus-Pulangi hydropower complexes.

According to Asec, the dependence of Energy is continuously monitoring the power supply situation in Mindanao to ensure sufficient supply, especially since the Agus-Pulangi complexes, which provided over half of the electricity requirements of the area, could no longer guarantee constant supply.

The year 2010 saw the vulnerability of Mindanao's power situation given its reliance on hydropower facilities. The island has been hit by a prolonged drought, which reduced the water levels at the dam and the capacity of the Agus-Pulangi complexes to only about 18 percent of its 760-MW capacity. This resulted in brownouts lasting from four to eight hours a day.

Asmrecs's plan to build a 300-MW coal plant is hoped to help address the power supply issues faced by Mindanao, especially since the DOE is expecting a power demand growth of 4.56 percent yearly starting 2012, Balisi said.

Asec added that the DOE would be assisting Asmrecs in ensuring that the proposed facility would be compliant with environmental regulations.

The DOE is expecting several power projects in Mindanao to start commercial operations within the next five years. These include Mindanao Energy Systems Inc.'s 20-MW bunker fired facility; Cotabato Holdings Corp.'s 200-MW coal facility in Zamboanga, and Energy Development Corp.'s 50-MW Mt. Apo 5.

In 2018, Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras said he wanted the Mindanao grid to have at least 500 MW in baseload generation capacity from sustainable sources such as coal, to insulate the island from severe power outages and unstable supply in the case of re.

Almendras said the 300 MW of sustainable baseload generation capacity was needed in Mindanao "since we cannot predict exactly what the water levels will be in Mindanao in the coming years."

The energy chief earlier admitted that electricity prices in Mindanao would have to increase gradually to reflect the true cost of power and encourage the private sector to close investments into the power sector on the island.

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

INVITATION TO BID

FB No. 2011-FB No 165 – Goods

3-Year Collocation Services for the SSS Business Recovery Center and Bulk Purchase of Supplies & Materials for CY 2011 – Part II

Project Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) / Amount Paid	Source of Funds	Source of Bidding Document	Date/Time Pre-Bid Conference	Date/Time Deadline/Opening of Technical Bids	Price of Bid Documents
3-Year Collocation Services for the SSS Business Recovery Center (BRC)	P30,000,000.00	Date of publication of Invitation to Bid in the Philippine Star and other selected agency or Private newspaper of nationwide coverage	Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC)	December 21, 2011 10:00 AM	January 10, 2012 10:00AM	P50,000.00
Office: (07) 920-6446	P30,000,000.00					
Bulk Purchase of Supplies & Materials for CY 2011 – Part II	Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC)	December 21, 2011 10:00 AM	January 10, 2012 10:00AM			
Supplies & Materials	P6,000,000.00					P6,000.00
Office Equipment	P5,000,000.00					P5,000.00
IT Supplies, Storage Equipment, Wheel Chair	P5,000,000.00					P5,000.00
Office: (07) 920-6446	P10,000,000.00					P10,000.00

Bids and awards are conducted by the SSS' duly constituted Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC).

The RBAC, after which it decides upon the lowest calculated and responsive bid, or the highest rated and responsive bid, in accordance with the Government Procurement Policy Board Rules and Regulations, and reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding or not award the contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

In addition, Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to associations or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to the IRR and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the RBAC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on 13 December 2011 from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos Only (PHP 5,000.00).

It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Procuring Entity, provided that Bidders shall pay the nonrefundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

The RBAC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on 21 December 2011, 10:00 a.m. at the RBAC Room that 4th Floor, PCDA Building, Bonifacio Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 10 January 2012. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

Bid opening shall be on 10 January 2012, 10:00 a.m. at the RBAC Board Room, 4th Floor, PCDA Building, Bonifacio Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.

To maximize the number of participating contractors, a special one-meeting holiday if not duly and timely noted on the last working day.

The RBAC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
Roces Building, Roces Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
Email: bac@peza.gov.ph
Telefax No. 551-0167
Tel. No. 551-0000 local 1413
www.peza.gov.ph

Atty. [illegible]
Chairman

BAC No. 11-2011

Philippine Economic Zone Authority

Roces Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
Telefax No. 551-0167
e-mail: bac@peza.gov.ph
website: www.peza.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS IT EQUIPMENT (PEZA-HO-2011-07)

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), through its Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2011 intends to apply the sum of Six Million Eight Hundred Thousand Pesos Only (PHP 6,800,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for payments under the contract for the Supply and Delivery of various IT Equipment. Bids received in excess of this ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

2. The PEZA now invites bids for the delivery of the following Goods:
   - Branded Desktop Computers with UPS – 21 sets
   - Laser Printers (Regular sized office) – 10 units
   - Inkjet Printers (Colored) – 1 unit
   - Scientific Printer – 01 unit

   Delivery of the Goods is required within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of Notice to Proceed. Bidders should have completed, within the three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly in Section II. Instructions to Bidders.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

   In addition, Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to associations or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to the IRR and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on 13 December 2011 from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos Only (PHP 5,000.00).

   It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Procuring Entity, provided that Bidders shall pay the nonrefundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

6. The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on 19 December 2011, 3:00 p.m. at the PEZA Annex Hall, 4th Floor, PEZA Building, Roces Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

7. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 02 January 2012. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

   Bid opening shall be on 02 January 2012, 11:00 a.m. at the PEZA Annex Hall, 4th Floor, PEZA Building, Roces Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.

8. In case the day of bid opening falls on a holiday, a special one-meeting holiday if not duly and timely noted on the last working day.

9. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

10. For further information, please refer to:

    Philippine Economic Zone Authority
    Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
    Roces Building, Roces Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
    Email: bac@peza.gov.ph
    Telefax No. 551-0167
    Tel. No. 551-0000 local 1413
    www.peza.gov.ph

    Atty. [illegible]
    Chairman, BAC

BAC No. 11-2011

UK firms keen on participating in PPP projects

By Jazy R. Rivera

UK-BASED COMPANIES have expressed strong interest in participating in the flagship public-private partnership (PPP) program of the Aquino administration.

Derek Hogg, director of the UK Trade and Investment in Manila, said British businesses were looking specifically at the LRT-6/MRT extension project under the Department of Transportation and Communications and the modernization of the Philippine Orthopedic Center under the Department of Health.

"These projects will undoubtedly involve some large Filipino companies, it is important for our British friend to get in touch with them and make our business capabilities known to them," Pope said in a statement received yesterday.

Other British companies, meanwhile, aired their interest in entering the Philippines by sharing their individual expertise in the implementation of the PPP projects, in support of the country's economic development.

UK Minister of State Jeremy Browne highlighted UK's extensive experience in public-private partnership projects in transport, health and education centers, and financial-legal services.

"We are in the business of trying to make sure that are offer solutions and we bring expertise in a way that brings great social benefit and progress to the Philippines," Browne said.

Those British companies, which attended the conference UK Investment Investment Mission, are currently involved in infrastructure, engineering and design, technical consultancy and project operations management.

In a briefing, the various PPP projects were presented to the delegates.

In the same event, Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo said he is delighted that the "Philippines is ready and open for business."

Among the investment opportunities he had offered were those in the areas of tourism, infrastructure and information technology.

Domingo added that the country was looking forward to a strategic relationship with United Kingdom in terms of investments.

It was only last year that the government launched the PPP program, with 10 big-ticket infrastructure projects lined up as priority projects.

Make everyday feel like a holiday at Seville and Lleida.

It's about time you reward your family with the gift of space.

Ortigas & Company reveals the secret to a balanced life: Circulo Verde, a premier living community. With 30% of its land dedicated to recreational areas, residents have the space to make this entire year feel like a holiday.

Circulo Verde gives you more reasons to feel the Christmas spirit with its wonderland of parks, gardens, jogging paths, swimming pool, and scenic shops and restaurants. Offering a variety of floor layouts, Circulo Verde is perfect for everyone – from independent individuals, starting families and retirees.

With the diversity of options of living spaces, Circulo Verde's contemporary lofts, condominiums, and single-family homes allow independent young couples and families to find homes that are suited to their needs. It is the much-desired space they can spend a warm Christmas in.

For the initial offering, Phase One provides a choice of five residential condominium buildings. Each building is crowned with sky gardens, landscaped atriums that bring the fresh and lush environment of the outdoors in the buildings.

Circulo Verde's 3rd tower, Seville, features 15 residential floors and a 2-level podium parking. Units are specifically designed with generous floor space, giving comfort and relaxation with a great view of the Sierra Madre mountain range. Its privileged residents are welcome to enjoy the bi-level sky garden in the sixth and seventh floors – a green sanctuary perfect for easing the day's worries away.

Rising 24 storeys high, the 4th Circulo Verde tower devotes 21 floors to residences. The first tower in Circulo Verde to offer studio units, Lleida is ideal for young professionals, independent individuals and investors. It features balconies on every floor and landscaped sky garden atriums on the 11th and 12th levels. Facing northeast, Lleida tower spares residents from the harsh afternoon sun while offering an impressive view of the city or the mountains.

Circulo Verde is amidst commercial and business establishments. This means spending less time on the road and more for recreation and relaxation. With life continuously rushing, take a break and escape to a haven within the metro, here at Circulo Verde, the best residential condo community in Quezon City.

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your living space

Circulo Verde is a joint development of Ortigas & Company. For inquiries, please call 638-1041, send a fax to 631-1962, e-mail to circuloverde@ortigas.com.ph or visit www.circuloverde.com.ph.

Gov't debt burden

Analysis B1

posted its largest.

The increase was attributed to the government having issued more local debt paper compared to new ones that were redeemed as well as the continuing depreciation of the peso against the dollar.

On the other hand, 40 percent or P2.09 trillion of the total outstanding debt was booked in foreign currencies like the dollar, euro and yen.

Aside from loans extended to multilateral lenders and official aid from foreign governments, the Philippines also borrows abroad through the issuance of bonds denominated in those currencies.

Foreign borrowings increased P153.3 billion or 2.6 percent from the P2.04 trillion owed to overseas lenders in August.

The increase in foreign debt was also mainly to the depreciation of the peso against the dollar, which added P97.6 billion to the debt stock.

The government also incurred P4.0 billion more in new debts than what had been repaid in September.

On the other hand, the depreciation of the yen and the euro against the dollar helped reduce the total obligations by P9.2 billion.

In September, government debt per person translated to dollars amounted to an equivalent of P1,432 million while yen and euro loans stood at P60.3 billion and P19.7 billion, respectively.

Cebu, Davao, Ortigas, and Pasay

LIVE

PLDT Conferencing Suite makes GSK's Duodart drug nationwide launch happen in real-time through Videoconferencing

Doctors at Sofitel in Manila, having questions from Cebu for the Duo audience

PLDT Conferencing Suite makes GlaxoSmithKline's nationwide product launch possible through Videoconferencing. Audiences from four distant locations in the Philippines simultaneously witnessed the unveiling of Duodart, a drug designed to target the symptoms of BPH (Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia).

It was an audience of about 2,000 doctors from different areas: 500 physicians in Sofitel Manila, 600 in EDSA Shangri-La, the same number in Radisson Blu Cebu and another 400 in Marco Polo Ortigas Wilcon would usually take days to execute took no more than just one evening to carry out. Usually, such launches entail flying in all the doctors to one site not to mention providing them with first-class accommodations.

For the Duodart launch, the doctors did not need to be gathered in one venue in order to be present at the event. All four sites were connected via PLDT Videocom's Business Front Video Solution, a service under the PLDT Conferencing Suite. This offering provides an end-to-end solution to clients who require services for events where the audience are geographically dispersed and need to be connected in real time. PLDT provides all the Videoconferencing equipment plus the connectivity on a per need basis with onsite technical personnel on standby.

Having facilities in all four sites, only PLDT ALPHA Enterprise could make GSK's event possible with its unmatched fiber optic network coverage. PLDT's IPVPN service was the backbone laid out to link all locations. A backup main host facility was also set in place for redundancy. Protection for the optical fiber technology system was also prepared.

Even with PLDT's robust network, there are certain factors that still always feed the reliability of their services – such as acts of Mother Nature. Typhoon Falcon mercilessly poured down all day, flooding the streets of Metro Manila, hindering the doctors and other guests from reaching the two hotels in time. But just like the unwavering spirits of the GSK team and the physicians who need despite it all, PLDT Videocom went live and delivered as expected, unaffected by the storm.

The launch was not merely a one-way stream from the main speaker in Sofitel to the remote audience. It was highly interactive. After all the speakers were done with their lectures, things got even more exciting as the floor was opened for Q&A. Guests from the remote sites got to ask the speakers themselves questions about the Duodart drug. The audience got to ask their questions and received answers face-to-face. Thanks to the multiple-site capability of PLDT Videocom, all four sites were able to see and speak to each other.

After the event, the doctors were very enthusiastic about the whole Videocom set up of the launch. They found it very unique and interesting. Most of them were intrigued upon being informed that it would be a simultaneous nationwide launch done via Videoconferencing. Some expressed the feeling that it was a loss for their colleagues who were not able to make it, because the launch itself was a one-of-a-kind event. For a lot of the doctors, it was their first ever Videoconferencing experience.

PLDT has again proven their leadership in telecommunications and as a strong partner of their long time client, GlaxoSmithKline. When asked, PLDT stepped up to the challenge and provided the cutting-edge solution to ensure the success of the event. Videoconferencing is a tool that can be used in many ways to enhance and service the client needed.

The power of PLDT Videocom is truly amazing and its applications are limitless. In Healthcare, Videoconferencing can be used for Health-presence or Telehealth wherein patients can be diagnosed remotely via Video. High-definition resolution coupled with pristine audio clarity close to real time through PLDT's robust connection is all there is to it. Healthpresence and other telehealth solutions can be had with PLDT Videocom – just one of the many ways in which PLDT ALPHA Enterprise is enabling the Philippines with state-of-the-art enterprise technology.

Audience from the conference in Cebu asked questions to doctors in Manila's Sofitel via Videocom

The audience in Cebu watch the proceedings in Manila

L-R: Ana Evangelista of PLDT Global Corporate Center, and Jose Rafael of PLDT

Doctors in Cebu, Ortigas, and Radisson are viewing the speaker in Sofitel, but also the visual presentation

A wide-screen image of all four Videoconferencing locations put into one

BUSINESS

DOTC projects to focus on Mindanao

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE AQUINO administration's infrastructure program will focus on the western Mindanao area, the presence of the country's three main island groups, Transportation Secretary Mar Roxas said.

In a statement, Roxas, who sits as a senior member of the Aquino economic team, said a significant portion of the P850 billion (the government would be spending over years through the DOTC would go to Mindanao.

"The Aquino administration will seek to change the country's economic landscape in the next five years with a 2950-billion- (capital expenditure) program, geared toward a significantly-improving people's lives all over the archipelago," Roxas said.

He said the DOTC sought to uplift the lives of the 30 million people in the Philippines still living below the official poverty line. Most of them, Roxas said, were living in conflict-ravaged areas in Mindanao.

He noted that one of the key infrastructure projects under the program was the construction of the Laguindingan airport, which was expected to support agricultural development in Mindanao.

"It will serve as the main airport of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities in northern Mindanao, and a counterpart of the Davao International Airport in southern Mindanao," he said.

The Laguindingan airport is expected to help boost Mindanao's potential as a national food basket, as well as a producer of the country's major agricultural exports such as bananas and coconut.

He said the DOTC would prioritize the development of new seaports and the improvement of existing ones in Mindanao.

Roxas said that with better, strategically located ports, more agricultural producers could expand the market for their products.

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority joins the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and other government agencies in launching the "UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2012-2018. The United nations the UNCT's strategic responses to the development priorities of the Philippines.(From left) Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Eduardo Martin Meñez, NEDA Deputy General Rolando Tungpalan, UN resident coordinator Jacqueline Badcock, Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo, Spanish Ambassador to the Philippines Jorge Dezcallar and Social Welfare Philippines co-convener Ingrid Stevens. pdi hands to support an "inclusive, sustainable and resilient development" for the country.

Atlas shipped $20.7M worth of copper in Nov.

By Riza T. Olchondra

ATLAS Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. said it had shipped 8303.7 million worth of copper concentrates in November. This was based on provisional and hedged prices of $3.63 per pound of copper and $1,749 per ounce of gold.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Atlas said its operating company, Carmen Copper Corp. (CCC), which operates the 1,674-hectare Toledo copper mine in Cebu province, shipped 9,702 DMT of concentrates.

Two shipments (4,975 DMT and 4,807 DMT of copper concentrates) were made through ABG Trading (C), which were consigned to Chinese smelters.

CCC resident manager Rodrigo C. Gil said in an enclosed report that the company's mine produced almost 1.1 million tons of ore with 0.31 percent copper. This made for an output of 9,022 DMT of copper concentrates with an average grade of 19.76 percent copper, 2.32 grams per ton gold and 21.5 grams per ton silver.

The ore came from the Lutopan pit.

Atlas showed strong growth in the first nine months of 2011 on high metal prices and increased shipments, vice president and director Ashley G. Ramos said last month on the sidelines of the company's stockholders' meeting in Pasig City.

Ramos said during the stockholders' meeting that the company's gross revenue for the first nine months of 2011 reached P6.9 billion, up from over P6.6 billion in the same period in 2010.

Consolidated net income for the first nine months of 2011 reached P2.64 billion, up from only P67 million a year ago.

Atlas said in a statement that CCC exported a net income of 32,006 billion for the third three quarters of 2011 or 4.7 times its net income during the same period last year.

Atlas began consolidating 100 percent of CCC's results at the end of July 2011.

Montalban Methane to expand power assets portfolio

By Amy R. Nuevo

MONTALBAN Methane Power Corp., which built the country's first methane power facility is diversifying its power generation portfolio by building facilities that can generate as much as 140 megawatts of power using other renewable energy sources.

Peregrino F. Fernandez Jr., president of Montalban Methane, told reporters that the company was looking to develop run-of-river hydro, wind and solar power projects across the country.

According to Fernandez, the company wanted to concentrate more on developing hydropower plants as these can run economically without having to rely on feed-in-tariff (FIT) rates. The feed-in-tariff (FIT) of "all the other renewable energy projects bingo on FIT" he added.

Fernandez further disclosed that Montalban Methane was preparing to spend $122 million or about P5.2 billion (at P43/one dollar) to three run-of-river hydropower projects scattered in the country's three main islands.

For the Visayas customers, Montalban Methane is developing a 9.6MW hydropower facility in Iloilo, with investments ranging up to $30 million (or about $1.29 billion). The construction of the power plant, which has already secured the green light from the Department of Energy, is expected to start by March next year, according to Fernandez.

For Mindanao, the company is putting up a 25-MW hydropower plant in Agusan, the costs of which are expected to reach around $80 million (roughly P3.44 billion). Fernandez said that Montalban Methane had started preparations for the power plant's construction, which is expected to start between this month-end and 2012.

He said Montalban Methane had secured a foreign partner for the Agusan hydropower project.

In Luzon, the company is looking to develop another 40-MW hydropower facility in Rizal, which will cost about $12 million (or about P516 million).

The company is looking for potential partners for a planned 10-MW wind power project in Luzon.

As for its planned solar power projects, Fernandez said the company was eyeing a 50-MW solar facility for Batangas, Pangasinan and/or Rizal. The particular project will be implemented with a foreign partner, he added.

Montalban Methane is a joint venture between the Danone Group (an owned by Salvador Zamora II (40 percent) and Carbon Asset Fund of Germany-based, a subsidiary owned company of UBS-based Carbon Capital Markets (40 percent).

It currently operates an 8.10-MW methane plant in Rizal, which serves some 20,000 metropolitan households with clean and green energy through the country's biggest power distributor.

Power Situation Outlook
for Monday, 12 December 2011

	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Available Capacity (MW)	8,384	1,352	1,244
Estimated Peak (MW)	6,895	1,008	1,223
Actual Reserve (MW)	1,489	347	111

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EVERY THURSDAY IN INQUIRER LIBRE
Accepts "For Sale", "For Hire" and "For Rent" of Real Estate, Transportation and General Items / Services.

'Asia in My Pocket' training program set

AIM's Beverly Philippine Foundation Inc. is set to conduct a series of training programs for its clients, young professionals and mid-career executives on how to do business in other Asian countries.

The "Asia in My Pocket" series, which will run starting January 2012, will have six separate seminar-workshop sessions on etiquette, customs and greetings of China, Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and India.

With the growing importance of Asia in economic and global development, Asia Institute believes that Filipino professionals should be equipped with the knowledge of establishing relationships with other Asian nationalities. The objective of the program is to equip participants with the multi-cultural knowledge and perspective that can interpret when interacting and transacting with different countries and nationals in Asia.

Participants will also get the chance to meet some of the ambassadors and diplomats of the featured countries.

Interested parties may call 7524374 or e-mail info@asiainmypocket.ph. Those who will register on or before Dec. 31, 2011 will get a 10 percent discount.

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BPI

BUSINESS

Truck body builder brings i-Van to PH market

First Filipino-made shuttle van to compete against imports

By Amy R. Roces

TRUCK body builder Cimaco Manufacturing Corp. has begun the local assembly of the i-Van body option for the Isuzu N300 at its plant in Mayapyap, Cavite.

In a statement, Cimaco vice president for sales and marketing Emmanuel Juan said the i-Van is the first locally assembled shuttle van to compete directly with foreign imports.

Designing and producing the i-Van is first a landmark accomplishment for the Filipino firm, Juan said.

Isuzu Philippines launched the Isuzu NPR with i-Van body earlier this year in response to the growing demand for people and cargo transport.

"The i-Van is what we can consider as proudly Pinoy made. It was conceptualized and designed by Pinoy engineers with local entrepreneurs and their needs in mind," Juan explained.

"It also considered local driving conditions and terrain. Thus, we can say that the i-Van was never meant for people and cargo easily and more economically anywhere in the country, whether in the urban communities or the rural areas," he added.

To prepare for this venture, Cimaco president Raphael Juan said the company had upgraded its stamping facilities to increase its production capacity and give the company better control of the quality, cost and delivery (QCD) of the metal parts needed.

East West Bank nets ₱1.5B as of October, down 6.1%

By Doris C. Dumlao

EASTWEST BANK (East West Bank) chalked up a net profit of ₱1.5 billion as of October, 6.1 percent lower year on year as lower trading gains tempered the bottom line impact of improved core businesses.

The January-to-October performance translated to a return on equity of 10.58 percent and return on assets of 1.91 percent, making it one of the country's top performing banks.

East West Bank president Antonio Moncayo Jr. said, "We are pleased with our operating results. Our core banking businesses continue to grow and asset productivity is improving. We are looking forward to ending the year with above average returns for our shareholders."

The bank's net revenues as of October reached ₱6.39 billion, lower by 5.1 percent compared to the same period last year, due to lower trading income.

Net interest income went up by 11.4 percent to ₱5.19 billion during the 10-month period as the bank improved its lending businesses and management of its cost of funds despite lower rates yields.

The bank grew its loan book by 21 percent to ₱451.7 billion as of mid-October from the level a year ago. Total consumer loans reached ₱223.4 billion, up by 18.3 percent year-on-year, which the bank attributed to the strong performance of its auto loans and credit card businesses.

Total corporate loans likewise rose by 26.8 percent to ₱221.9 billion from a year ago.

Outside of its lending and trading businesses, non-interest income went up by 1.3 percent to ₱1.4 billion. Meanwhile, trading gains for the first 10 months shrank by 52.6 percent to ₱97.9 million, tracking industry performance, as rising loan an unprecedentedly high trading income period for banks in 2010.

The bank's total resources hit ₱66 billion as of October, higher by 13.6 percent than a year ago.

Part of its assets was funded by ₱67.3 billion in deposits, which increased by 12.6 percent from a year ago.

Lower trading gains temper income growth

Gold Fields eyes Mankayan for $70M

By Riza T. Olchondra

GOLD Fields Ltd., one of the world's top gold producers, is exploring the possibility of acquiring the Mankayan copper-gold project in Benguet for $70 million.

This would expand the South 48-km mining giant's concessions in the province's Mankayan-Lepanto gold district.

The Mankayan project is adjacent to the Far Southeast (FSE) project of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp., where Gold Fields can also take a 60-percent stake. If Gold Fields exercises its option on both projects, it will have consolidated a big chunk of the so-called Mankayan-Lepanto gold district. Lepanto's ongoing Victoria gold project has one of the three known ore bodies in the same gold district.

The owner of this deal, Crescent Mining and Development Corp. (the operating company for the Mankayan project) has just filed a renewal of its mineral production sharing agreement or MPSA to complete exploration of the project," Mines and Geosciences Bureau director Engr. Leo L. Jasareno said in an interview.

Gold Fields, through subsidiary Gold Fields Netherlands Services BV, has signed a deal with Perth based Bronzi Resources Plc. Bronzi said in a disclosure that it is selling its subsidiary—Asean Copper Investments Limited—to Gold Fields Netherlands under an option agreement signed on Oct. 4, 2011.

Asean has a 40-percent stake in the 534-hectare Mankayan project, through operating company Crescent Mining, and holds an option with Bronzi to acquire or assign the remaining 60 percent of Crescent's issued share capital.

The option agreement delivered a non-refundable upfront cash payment of $7 million to Bronzi and a potential further cash outs of $63 million, which Gold Fields will pay when it exercises the option to acquire the entire issued share capital of Asean.

Gold Fields has about a year to conclude due diligence in Mankayan and may exercise its option in the project any time until Jan. 23, 2013. As for the adjacent FSE deposit, Gold Fields has until March 2012 to exercise its option to take a majority stake.

Bronzi chairperson Gerry Strokin said in a statement posted on the company website that since Gold Fields already holds an option over Lepanto's FSE project, the Johannesburg-based miner's ongoing exploration activities are "expected to identify synergistic benefits."

Truck body . . .

From page B1

"We recently invested in two computerized, hydraulic-controlled (CNC) press brake machines to beef up our existing stamping capacity," Jison said.

According to Jison, Century had purchased a 320-ton top-of-the-line Yuanyel CNC press brake made in Aurora to handle metal sheets up to 6.5 millimeters thick and over 10 feet long.

A second investment was made in another bending machine, a 110-ton Taiwanese-made Jih NC press brake that could process metal sheets up to 3.5 mm thick and over 12 feet long.

"This will ensure that the various metal parts needed to assemble the i-Van body are available when needed and probably making us the technical leader in truck body building nationwide," Jison explained.

"Coupled with our existing ISO certification and TS 16949 certification we are working on, this will also enable us to produce world-class, export-quality truck bodies for the region," he added.

need a job?

Maybank

Citing sluggish economy, state bank reins in loan disbursals

By Bernard W. Dominguez

THE HONG KONG Philippine Export Import (Philexim) Bank this year may not be able to fully disburse the P25 billion in loans it obtains due to the sluggish economy, particularly during the third quarter.

Francisco L. Magsaysay Jr., Philexim president and chief executive, said the slowdown of overseas orders for locally manufactured products led to a decline in demand for the bank's services.

"We have released to our clients some P18 billion in outstanding loans as of the end of October," Magsaysay said in an interview. "But we may not reach the target (of P25 billion) for 2011."

Earlier, Magsaysay was quoted as saying that Philexim could grow its business by as much as 75 percent to P25 billion this year, from P14 billion in 2010, through the infrastructure and development projects guaranteed under the Aquino administration's public-private partnership (PPP) programs.

But after months of hope, projects under the PPP scheme have yet taken off, and Philexim may have to take action on persistent, even as its goal of growing its business by 44 percent.

"Even investors that would have proceed to rehabilitate or new capital have shown signs of slowing down," Magsaysay said. "But the pace [of our business] is still okay."

In 2012, Philexim plans to build up its portfolio by "five times as much as the government's gross domestic product growth target of between 5.3 percent and 6.5 percent," the CEO said.

He said Philexim would also increase its loan exposure by 39 percent in 2012 from that of 2011.

"Data problems in the euro zone may impact next year, but we are looking at the Asian market and other nontraditional markets," Magsaysay said.

Under Republic Act No. 8494, which reorganized and renamed the former Philippine Export and Foreign Loan Guarantee Corp., Philexim is mandated to promote and facilitate the entry of foreign loans into the country for development purposes.

Philexim is focused on the needs of export-oriented industries, industries registered with the Board of Investments and public utilities.

Philexim guarantees loans that Philippine banking and financial institutions extend to qualified importers, producers of export products, and contractors with approved service contracts abroad.

Magsaysay said a huge chunk of Philexim's exposure is in the production of basic metals that would be shipped to China and Japan, as well as power generation, particularly those involving renewable energy resources.

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PSBank ranked as strongest savings bank in Asia Pacific

PSBank, the thrift bank arm of the Metrobank Group, was ranked the strongest savings bank in the Asia Pacific region in a study done by The Asian Banker magazine.

The Asian Banker, a key publication in the financial services industry, based the ranking on the data gathered from 2010 annual reports of the top 500 banks in the region and statistics provided by central banks or industry associations. The banks' financial and business performance were evaluated in terms of asset size and strength, as these demonstrate the long-term profitability of their core businesses.

PSBank is the first and only savings bank included among the top 10 local banks in the study and placed 5th among the strongest banks in the Philippines. The bank was also ranked as the 57th strongest among the top 500 banks in the Asia Pacific.

The Asian Banker assessed the Asia Pacific's strongest banks using the following parameters for comparing financial institutions across the region and within countries: assets to GDP (scale); growth in loans and deposits (balance sheet growth); loans to deposits ratio and capital adequacy ratio (risk profile); growth in operating profits, return on assets, cost to income ratio, non-interest income to total operating income (profitability); loan loss reserves to NPL and non-performing loans ratio (asset quality); and liquid assets to total deposits and borrowing (liquidity).

Out of the top 500 banks in the region, 16 Philippine banks made it to the Asian Banker list which is a testament to the strength and stability of the local banking sector.

PSBank

PSBank is truly honored to receive this recognition. In the entire Asia Pacific region, we have proven that a Philippine bank can rise above the rest. Sa pagsusumikap at tiwala ng buo, iyan na maasahan ang lakas ng Pilipino.

This recognition was cited in The Asian Banker 500, an independent third party research and intelligence company that provides information on strategic developments in the financial services industry in the Asia Pacific region. Over the past ten years, it has developed a strength scorecard that ranks the 500 largest banks on the basis of financial and business performance.

Simple lang. Maasahan.

PSBank

www.psbank.com.ph

Celebrate the Month of Overseas Filipinos December 2011 and International Migrants Day December 18, 2011

MONTH OF OVERSEAS FILIPINOS DECEMBER 2011

with the theme:

Overseas Filipinos: Rising to Global Challenges

BACKGROUND

SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL INSTRUMENTS HAVE BEEN PASSED TO RECOGNIZE MIGRANTS AS AGENTS OF GLOBAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCLAIMED DECEMBER 18 EACH YEAR AS INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY ON 4 DECEMBER 2000.

IN THE PHILIPPINES, FORMER PRESIDENT CORAZON C. AQUINO ISSUED PROCLAMATION NO. 276 ON 21 JUNE 1988, INSTITUTIONALIZING THE COMMEMORATION OF THE MONTH OF OVERSEAS FILIPINOS EVERY DECEMBER. FORMER PRESIDENT GLORIA M. ARROYO ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE ROLE OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO COMMUNITIES IN ACHIEVING THE NATION'S DEVELOPMENT GOALS BY ISSUING THIS CALL FOR THE OBSERVATION OF THE MOF AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 203 ISSUED IN OCTOBER 2007. THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE IS CHAIRED BY THE PHILIPPINE MIGRANTS RIGHTS WATCH, CO-CHAIRED BY THE COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS, WITH MEMBERS AND PARTNERS FROM GOVERNMENT, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY.

FOR THE DECEMBER 2011 CELEBRATIONS, THE IAC HAS LINED UP VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES BENEFITING FILIPINO MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES, IN LINE WITH THIS YEAR'S THEME "OVERSEAS FILIPINOS: RISING TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES."

Organized by: Philippine Migrants Rights Watch, Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Department of Tourism, Department of Trade and Industry, Presidential Communications Operations Office, Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Inter-Development Council of the Philippines, Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, Pag-IBIG Fund, Social Security System, Migrant Forum in Asia, and Philippine Migration Research Network.

HIGHLIGHTS

December Forum
Discussion topics:

- Migration and Climate Change
- The Effects of the "Arab spring" on Migration

Last Bank of the Philippines Auditorium
Thursday, December 15, 12:00-5:00 p.m.
By invitation only

Migration Advocacy and Media Awards
Recognition of private and public media initiatives that have raised public awareness on Filipino migration issues, advocated the cause of overseas Filipinos &/or promoted a positive image of overseas Filipinos, and focused on related migration and development concerns.

Last Bank of the Philippines Auditorium
Thursday, December 15, 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.
By invitation only

Cultural Presentation
A cultural performance by the OF Singing Ambassadors, POEA Chorale and Landbank Musical Ensemble featuring songs and Christmas Carols by overseas Filipinos and their families.

Last Bank of the Philippines Auditorium
Thursday, December 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
By invitation only

Electronic DH8
Film-showing of the movie "Ennil," a musical on the experiences of a Filipino nanny who decided to work abroad to help her family. The audience will discuss the impact and significance of the movie on migrant families and on the Philippines in general, in the context of migration and development.

Tuesday, December 13, 10:00-11:00 noon
At SM Cinemas except Fairlane, Grand & Tarlac, Pine Open to all

Fun Run
A fun run to raise public awareness on the celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos.

Sunday, December 18, 5:00 a.m.
Quezon City Circle
Open to all

For the complete list of programs, events and services during the Month of Overseas Filipinos, please contact (+63 2) 1552-6782 up to 87, lfinggal@cfo.gov.ph or www.cfo.gov.ph

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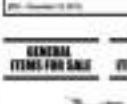

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NOTICE TO PUBLIC

This gives notice that **BENJIE ARQUINES Y CARINO**, whose picture appears above of B7 Lot 9 Estrella Homes Subdivision San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan is no longer connected **effective October 14, 2011** to **VICS CONSTRUCTION & SONS CO**. Any transaction entered into in his behalf will not be honored.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

"Terminated Employee"

This is to inform the public that **MARIA LEILANIE REYES MANAMPAN** of B7 Lot Dadayrodiso Paryahe, San Nicolas II, Dasmarinas, Cavite, whose picture appears above has been officially terminated for cause effective 28 November 2011, and is no longer connected with **MEG Global Ship Management and Manning Corporation** (the "Corporation").

Any transaction made by her shall not be honored by the Corporation. Please report any unauthorized and/or illegal activity of Ms. Manampan through e-mail at meg_global@hotmail.net.

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Rizal High School Batch '90 Christmas Party 2011

The Rizal High School Batch '90 cordially invites all Christmas Party on Dec. 17, 2011 at the 3rd floor and roof deck of the Alumni Hall Bldg., Rizal High School Compound, Pasig City (food open onwards). There will also be a Kris Kringle worth P50.00. Veterans are celebrating our 20th year. Suggested gifts may be something Chino or Pantoon. Also please visit our website at www.facebook.com/groups/KalbarRizal

Message of Thanks

On the demise of

ROSARIO MAÑALAC JAYME
"Rosie"

We, her children, Gabby, Vangie, Jury, Maricon, Danny, Timmy and Martin, and our family members wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all who offered masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with us in our hour of bereavement.

CLASSIFIEDS

Sitel Philippines launches group buying site for employees

SITEL, A LEADING GLOBAL PROVIDER OF customer care outsourcing services, has recently launched a group buying site exclusively for its employees in the Philippines. In partnership with the Boyanihan Group, Sitel's site called Sitel Boyanihan Group Buying Corporation is the first of its kind in the business process outsourcing industry.

Sitel Boyanihan's main objective is to create added value by providing employees a diverse reward system that boosts their buying power. The site offers exclusive deals and promotions to Sitel employees and family members. It also serves to leverage average buyers within Sitel to sell products through the Sitel Boyanihan Site.

Sitel general manager for Philippines, Australia and New Zealand Trevor Fressanges led the planning and implementation of the project. "We are constantly thinking of ways to demonstrate the advantage of being a Sitel employee. This initiative is another example of our commitment to reward more to our employees," according to Fressanges. "We are happy to launch the project before the holidays to show our appreciation for the hard work and dedication of our associates," he added.

The project garnered almost 300 sign-ups in the first 24 hours from launch. Many were excited to experience a secure online shopping experience that complements their schedules. "Overnight work is challenging for our staff especially since many retailers don't offer extended hours or operation, making shopping difficult. Sitel's Boyanihan partnership aims to bring convenience, ease and fun to shopping, all the sudden does reaching buying power," said Sitel Asia Pacific vice president for human resources Haidee Enriquez.

With a vision to become the employer of choice, provide more jobs in Filipinos, and create the next generation of leaders, Sitel Philippines has implemented many innovations that enhance the communities and growing the talent of talent. In addition to Sitel Boyanihan, Sitel has successfully implemented Sitel Academy, a competency-building program which aims to increase the yield of people who join the BPO industry in support of the 2016 workforce goal of the IT-BPO industry and the Philippine government's thrust for job generation. Another first in the industry is the Sitel Mega Leadership Program, an innovative leadership program in partnership with the Ateneo Business School Publishing designed to help supercharge the potential and learnings of high performance leaders in Sitel.

These innovations have greatly contributed to Sitel's recognition as 2011 Hall of Fame for Outstanding Employer by The Philippine Economic Zone Authority, finalists in Asia Asia CSR Awards categories, 2008 BPO Company of the Year by the International CIT Awards - Philippines and win of 1st CSR Excellence Award from the American Chamber of Commerce.

Headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, U.S., Sitel employs more than 57,000 associates worldwide with a global footprint that expands across 30 countries and 135 facilities throughout North America, South America, Europe, Africa, and the Asia Pacific. Sitel Philippines' eight facilities are located in Pasay City, Quezon City, Mandaluyong City, and Baguio City. For more information about Sitel, visit www.sitel.com.

PORTAL EAST REACHES OUT TO VISAYAS MARKET

PortalEast, Inc., distributor of quality uPVC windows and doors in the Philippines, opens its Visayas showroom at a new ninety commercial building along A. S. Fortuna Street in Cebu City to reach out to the local market.

CLASSIFIEDS RATES

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In Loving Memory
on the 12th Death Anniversary of

Teresa Gomez Yuchengco
(Titang)

who peacefully joined her Creator on December 12, 1999

Her husband, Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco and her family and loved ones request relatives and friends to join them in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Holy Mass will be offered at:

Teresa G. Yuchengco Chapel
Podium 4, RCBC Plaza, Makati City
on Monday, 12 December 2011 at 6 p.m.

Message of Thanks

The family of the late

JIMMY O. YAOKASIN

of Tacloban City, Leyte
who peacefully joined our Creator
on November 19, 2011 at the age of 66
would like to thank all of you
who expressed your love and sympathy
during our time of bereavement.

With deep gratitude and sincere appreciation from his wife Carmen,
his children
Jinglin and Annely, Jerry "Tamba" and Kathleen,
his grandchildren
Amber, Jeebner and Adrielle; Kyle, Kieffer and King

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4)

BUSINESS

PH in better position to deal with foreign debt

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S ability to settle its debts to foreign creditors improved in the first eight months of the year.

Data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) showed that from January to August, the country's debt service burden ratio, or the proportion of its liabilities to its export earnings and remittances, improved to 8.05 percent from the 9.71 percent reported in the same period last year.

The decline, which officials said was an indication of an improvement in the country's credit-worthiness, was a result of a drop in maturing obligations and an increase in the combined amount of remittances and export revenues.

Maturing obligations to foreign creditors amounted to $5.864 billion, down by 4.6 percent from $6.318 billion. Remittances and export earnings reached $56.686 billion, up by 3.1 percent from $54.975 billion.

Monetary and finance officials earlier said the improving capacity of the country to pay its debts should prompt ratings agencies to mull over a possible upgrade of the country's credit ratings.

The Philippines wants its sovereign bonds to have an investment-grade rating. At present, ratings agencies consider the bonds as speculative.

The country is rated a notch below investment grade by Fitch, and two notches below the grade by Moody's Investors Service and Standard & Poor's.

The government hopes that the country will attain investment-grade status by 2013. Monetary and finance officials believe that the country deserves credit ratings no lower than a notch below investment grade.

The BSP earlier reported that the country's foreign exchange reserves stood at a new record level of $76.2 billion as of end-November—20 percent higher than the $60.56 billion reported in the same period last year.

BSP cites declining liabilities, rising earnings

Congress urged to reconsider Napocor budget

VERA BEN National Power Corp. (Napocor) has asked Congress to reconsider the firm's budget, saying that the P15 billion it is set to receive will not be enough to fund its capital expenditure requirements and operations.

In an interview, Napocor president Froilan A. Sampilo said the corporation would need the full amount of P15 billion to ensure the smooth operations of its small power utilities group (SPUG), which provides electricity to communities in remote areas of the country.

"If the 5% billion will not be approved, we will be forced to defer some crucial capital expenditure projects. We will not be able to cover all the SPUG areas adequately," Sampilo said.

"It's either we forego certain projects, or it is a really necessary, we will have to file for a supplemental budget in 2012. We however don't expect next year to be as bad as 2011 because we can live with the P15 billion budget. Still, many projects may be deferred. In 2011, our budget was only good up to the first half of the year," he explained.

Early this year, some remote and off-grid areas where the SPUG operates encountered power supply shortfalls because Napocor was unable to pay its fuel suppliers.

Napocor was not able to raise the necessary funds after the Department of Justice barred the cash-strapped firm from conducting bond issuances.

Napocor's average operational requirements run to about P1.3 billion a month.

The Napocor SPUG serves 234 island and isolated grids, providing electricity to 39 electric cooperatives, seven local government units and a multipurpose cooperative.

Amy R. Remo

Losing Hair? Save Your Hair Now!

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Allan Cadiz had his share of hairloss problems. But thanks to Svensson's anti-hairloss treatments, he regained his thick, healthy hair in no time! He shares: "Last year, while watching my game later, I noticed there was visible thinning in my crown area. The camera normally shoots from behind the bench where I sit so you really see the thinning on top of my head. That made me feel very self-conscious. I wore caps to hide it but I never tried over-the-counter products because of possible side effects. I won't risk it but I did decide to try Svensson. And I'm glad I did. After a few months of treatments, I can honestly tell you that I'm very happy with the improvements to my hair. People tell me that it has become thicker. I'm more confident now. I don't have to worry if there's a camera behind me because I don't have to hide anything. I believe in Svensson because I've seen improvements in my hair!"

Like Allan, regain your confidence and look younger with healthier and thicker hair! Call **892-HAIR (4247)** / **216-8881 Cebu** for a FREE private consultation.

DOE ready for possible sale of 700-MW plant

By Amy R. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT is well prepared to deal with the possible sale of the 700-megawatt Agus-Pulangi hydropower complex as the private sector—a decision that still has to be made by the Joint Congressional Power Commission (JCPC), Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras said.

The Department of Energy has already put together a menu of options for the lawmakers once the JCPC decides on whether it will sell the power complex, Almendras told the INQUIRER.

"We are awaiting the JCPC's final decision on that. The problem is there are still quite a number of congressmen who don't want it sold, or they have to settle what. Either way we have a plan," he said.

The energy chief explained that should the Agus-Pulangi hydropower complex—a crucial power generation asset in Mindanao—be put up for auction, the DOE would ensure that the winning bidder would continue to operate the facilities for the benefit of the people.

According to Almendras, the DOE wants to include certain provisions in the contract, such as five-year condition requirements, trading conditions, ownership conditions, and even technical considerations on the use of the stand-ons and auxiliary facilities.

These provisions, he said, must be followed strictly.

"I know that before, I said I was not in favor of selling the Agus Pulangi hydropower complex, but now, I'm amenable to it because we're putting in a lot of provisions in the contracts to ensure that it will be operated for the benefit for the people of Mindanao," Almendras said.

Earlier, the energy chief was cited as saying illegally when he opposed the privatization of the Agus-Pulangi complex, as mandated under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA).

In case the JCPC decides not to push through with the bidding of the hydropower complex, the DOE will ensure that the Agus and Pulangi complex will not be a burden to the state, Almendras said.

"If these facilities will not be put up for auction, we can sell the concessions instead. We can also seek for an operation and maintenance contract... There are many options," Almendras stressed.

The private sector has been urging the government to proceed with the sale of the Agus-Pulangi hydropower complex in Mindanao, explaining that any other form of privatization will not be economically feasible and may even unnecessarily hike power prices on the island.

Ernesto Pantoja, president of the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association (PIPPA), earlier said that the proposals by other groups to have an operation and maintenance agreement prior to the sale of the facilities would not work because "nobody is operating and maintaining a plant that is dilapidated. As such, there is an incentive to make investments in improving the power plants."

Also, the group has proposed that the sale of the hydropower complex be tied-in with long-term power supply contracts to attract investors.

BUSINESS Monday

Business Features Editor
Marjie Quiogue-Espeso

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Sumo Sam targets Visayas and Mindanao

First branch in the Visayas opens at the Terraces of Ayala Center in Cebu

By Cris Evert B. Luza
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Entering the Cebu market is a tough move for Japanese restaurant Sumo Sam.

Consumers have the reputation of being unsatisfied and cautious in the way they spend money.

But partnering with Cebuano entrepreneurs Sharon Lopez and Glory Lopez-Go gives the 68-year-old restaurant the confidence to expand outside of Metro Manila.

"We've known Glory's family for years and we are just lucky to be working with people who love food and the brand... and understand the kind of business that we're doing," says Raymond Magdaleno, one of the co-founders of Sumo Sam who brings high quality Japanese cuisine to the Philippines at a price point that is not too expensive, says Magdaleno.

"We felt that there was a gap in the market between the expensive restaurants (which offer high quality food) and (small restaurants) that sell food at low prices," he says.

"When prices are low, they can't use premium ingredients. At the same time, if it's too high, we are not able to capture the market so we aimed to build a restaurant that is not too expensive with price points that will enable us to serve quality products," Magdaleno explains.

With the addition of Cebu and Davao, Sumo Sam now has nine branches, seven of which are located in Luzon (Pampanga and Laguna) and three in Manila.

Magdaleno says they will open 10 to 15 stores in the next two years.

Sumo Sam first opened in

JUMP B4-C

RESTAURANT chain owner Raymond Magdaleno

PHOTOS FROM RESTAURANT'S FACEBOOK PAGE

MARVIN Aguilar is not just an actor, he's an entrepreneur, too

owns other restaurants like Cheesdabest, The Red Crab, New Orleans and recently set up a gym named FIX.

The first Sumo Sam restaurant in the Visayas opened at the Terraces of Ayala Center Cebu last Nov. 24. It is a joint venture between the Lopez sisters and Magdaleno's team, which includes actor Marvin Agustin and GMA marketing manager Ricky Lesaleo.

The Cebu restaurant has 130 seats.

Sumo Sam also opened a 70-seat restaurant in Davao in September 2011 with the goal of bothering their rivals in the regional market.

Sharon Lopez, who spearheads the family's real estate business, says her older sister, Glory is friends with Magdaleno, Agustin and Lesaleo and learned about their interest in expanding in the Visayas and Mindanao.

"We thought that it was good opportunity to partner. We love the food at Sumo Sam and we're confident that the Cebuanos will accept the brand. The menu choice suited to both the young and old market and it has been modified from the traditional Japanese cuisine to suit the palates of the Filipinos," says Lopez.

Started in 2005, Sumo Sam was born with the idea of

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Why mining in this country is unsustainable

MAPPING THE FUTURE
Nicolo S. Fabiador

SUPPORTERS OF mining in this country argue their case by underscoring the industry's potential contribution to development. To be sure, many well-meaning public figures and organizations that champion mining as a "developmental strategy, including the Mindanao-wide dissemination of the Philippines' exposure of the columns, qualify their stand by asserting that mining operations should, in addition, be "sustainable." The burning industry itself (and government agencies that are responsible for its regulation) usually prefix its official position on this contentious issue with the same magical words, "developmental" and "sustainable." But as individual mining establishments in their efforts to frustrate their images as upright corporate citizens.

Stakeholders

My own position on this issue is that under present legal and institutional conditions, mining in the Philippines cannot be developmental nor sustainable.

There is one thing about mining, however, that we can all agree on: It has tremendous potential for creating economic value, and under current global market conditions, it is a very profitable business.

The questions I pose are twofold: (1) How is that economic value created by mining operations distributed among the various stakeholders in the industry? In particular, how much of this added economic value goes to the citizens of the country who, after all, own our natural wealth?, (2) How are the costs associated with this activity shared among them?

For our present purpose, I shall focus on the two major stakeholders in mining operations: the community—and in the larger context, the whole of society—in which this activity is being undertaken; and the owner of the mining establishments. (The other stakeholders in mining operations include the employees, contractors, suppliers and financiers, all of whom, understandably, want the firms to be successful, i.e., to be profitable.)

These stakeholders have different and often conflicting economic goals. Communities and the country's citizenry are maximized by their collective desire for sustained economic and social upliftment (or, development); while mining firms are driven mainly by immediate returns on investment.

These two stakeholders also have divergent time perspectives. The community has a much longer outlook, considering over many generations well into the future, while business firms have a much shorter time perspective which usually depends on their systems and production cycles.

So disparate are the economic interests and time frames of these two groups of stakeholders that it is impossible to find a common solution to the "mining problem" that is satisfactory to both. Ultimately, country and society would want to realize as much development from mining operations while putting in check the accompanying social costs. In the same vein, mining firms would want to maximize their returns at the lowest possible operational costs. In a word, both seek to maximize their net economic gains from mining operations. All too often, however, the economic benefits accruing to the mining industry are realized at the expense of some economic sacrifice on the part of society, mainly in terms of reduced future productivity.

Sticking point

The major sticking point in the mining issue arises from the fact that each stakeholder has a different view of the costs that they have to bear in pursuing their economic objectives. When a mining firm, for example, dirties the atmosphere, pollutes water supplies, contaminates the soil, and disturbs the delicate geological balance in the area within and around the mining site, the corresponding costs in terms of lower long-run economic productivity from the mining area are borne not by the firm but by the community. Unless these so-called external costs are factored into the private cost-benefit calculations of the firm, mining activities will be extended beyond levels that are considered socially the long-run interests of society. From a social viewpoint, mining operations are sub-optimal and therefore unsustainable.

Individual mining projects are also unsustainable because the owner of the mining concessions themselves. At some point in time, the mineral ore that is being mined is completely exhausted, or extraction costs become prohibitive and their operations cease to be viable. The company then turns business current operations and moves on to other sites in the country or elsewhere in the world, and the community in question is left holding the bag. (This is my point. I invite the reader to take a look at Diwalwal in Compostela Valley or Rapu-Rapu in the town of Legazpi in Bicol, or to visit the towns of Pantukan in Camarines Norte, or Santa in Palawan, or come to Baguio City itself and see for himself/herself the current "development" that is ruining her countryside in these communities.)

This is where government as *conservator* of the national patrimony comes in. It can enact and implement laws that force mining firms to set aside in advance the environmental fund due to replace in one form or another the economic resources that they have extracted from nature—say, by building new schools or by diversifying the community's water distribution system—in order to ensure that the mining areas concerned to their natural or economically productive values when they leave as when they first came in. The main reason why this ideal situation remains a pipe dream is the very flawed law that is supposed to govern the economic value of our minerals, namely, R.A. 7942, or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, which effectively legitimizes the many acts of economic malfeasance perpetrated by mining firms in the country. (More on this in another column, given the opportunity.)

'Incentive problem'

There is yet another reason, however, one that economists call the "incentive problem," and to which I now turn.

In the context of our present discussion, the problem arises from the fact that the many bodies that make the decisions in mining companies and in government policies that concern mining activities do not have the same incentives in making their choices, inasmuch as mutually conflict with those of the individuals who employ them—the stockholders in the case of mining corporations, and the citizens of the land in the case of policy.

At a risk, the managers of mining companies are evaluated and rewarded for their efforts in generating profits for their employers. They therefore have the financial incentives to undertake, ignore, conceal or avoid certain costs that have an direct bearing on income, including those that causes environmental damage or safety hazards to the community. They can do this with impunity because they alone are privy to relevant engineering and technical information that are treated as trade secrets and encrypted in technical reports—data that could be potentially damaging to the corporation should these fall into the "wrong" hands.

For their part, elected and appointive officials or all levels of government are motivated by their re-electability or pre-mineability (in addition, of course, to their usual financial interests). Promoting "development" is therefore in their personal interests, even if this is done at the expense of the economic interests of future generations of Filipinos.

Mining is a messy business, figuratively and literally speaking, and to say that it is good for the country is self-deluding.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is a knowledge management consultant. Feedback at: mnfabiador@yahoo.com.ph. For previous articles, please visit <mngt.org.ph>.)

CATHAY Pacific launches new business class.

Carrier presents world's first customized airline application

CATHAY Pacific celebrates its 65th anniversary this year with a series of milestones and accomplishments that spoke further its mission to be the world's best airline, as well as top, hold the company's commitment to service and product excellence and innovation.

Kicking off with the release of its impressive 2010 annual results, the carrier continued to step up its efforts to improve passenger services, starting with the launch of the airline's new business class. Progressively rolled out beginning the first quarter of the year, the product ups the concept of luxury travel via a top-of-the-line design and additional amenities and features.

The airline also introduced premium economy seating options and launched The Cabin—the latest addition to the Cathay Pacific Group lounges at the Hong Kong International Airport. A partnership with the Mandarin Group resulted in an in-flight menu premium healthier (but yeast) which introduced over 36 dishes designed by the chefs of the renowned group of restaurants in Fern Class, Business Class, and Economy Class passengers onboard Cathay Pacific flights.

In response to the general increase in the use of mobile applications, the carrier successfully presented the world's first ever customized airline application. Designed for the BlackBerry PlayBook, the tablet offering provides access access to services such as flight booking and check-in.

CATHAY Pacific country manager Martin Xu

Moreover, as part of its 65th anniversary celebration in the Philippines, the airline launched its 65 percent Mondrian frame, an exclusive deal for Philippine-based flyers that offers an additional 65 percent Asia Miles when they purchase a roundtrip ticket from Manila to Los Angeles, New York, Chicago or San Francisco.

Finally, Cathay Pacific Philippines welcomed new additions to its management team, including newly appointed country manager Martin Xu and Cebu manager Maggie Wang. Xu, who has been with the airline for 18 years, expressed optimism for the company in the coming years.

"Cathay Pacific is now the world's third most profitable airline in terms of net profit, among other achievements. But we will not stop there," says Xu. "Our runners-ups next assured that we will carry on providing them with the kind of experience they've come to expect from us, and as Manila is one of the airline's four global hubs, we will continue to work forward giving our Filipino passengers more reasons to fly Cathay Pacific."

Cathay Pacific Airways offers passenger and cargo services to destinations in Asia, Australia, North America, Middle East, Europe and Africa. Operating over 320 wide-body aircraft, the premium carrier flies one of the youngest fleets in the air. The high level of personal service Cathay Pacific offers acts it apart and earns it passenger loyalty and industry awards.

Purefoods maintains lead in ham segment

PUREFOODS Hormel Company Inc. has maintained its lead in the Christmas ham category, a segment that typically sees intense competition during the fourth quarter of the year, new recent market studies by well-known research firms found.

In an independent retail audit audit conducted nationwide by Nielsen, Purefoods Christmas Ham, with Purefoods Fiesta Ham as its flagship brand, came out as the No. 1 brand in the country in terms of volumes and sales.

In another survey conducted by TNS Global, a global research firm with presence in 80 countries, Purefoods Christmas Hams, again led by Purefoods Fiesta Ham, hosted seven other well-known brands as the "runaway favorite" of almost 80 percent of the food respondents.

Purefoods also came out on top of the consumer survey as the brand most often used or served (76 percent) and also registered the highest trial rate (94 percent), meaning 9 out of 10 have tried the brand.

"It's a big affirmation that almost 8 out of 10 consumers continue to favor Purefoods Christmas Hams. Purefoods Fiesta Ham has been preferred and trusted by generations of Filipino families who want to make their Christmas celebrations extra special. It is an important part of the Filipino Christmas tradition," says

A WORKER readies a fresh batch of Purefoods Fiesta Ham at the state-of-the-art facility of Purefoods Hormel Co. in General Trias, Cavite.

group product manager Mira Cabarrous.

The brand, made of pure, premium meat aged-glazed to perfection, was first released in the early 1980s, and has been the market leader since.

Sumo Sam targets Visayas and Mindanao

From page B4-1

December 2005 at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall in Mandaluyong City.

It has received positive feedback and loyal following from customers who appreciate the way they integrate different cooking styles and ingredients into Japanese cuisine.

"When people encounter the word 'Yakiniku' they tend to get confused of what their dining experience will be. We like the goal of making our customer's experience during the combining different techniques and elements of cooking from different cultures and disciplines of international cooking integrating it to Japanese cuisine without sacrificing taste, service and quality of dishes," he says.

Magdalaya says each Sumo Sam restaurant will come out with dishes unique to its specific branch. They will have one of the most appealing qualities of Sumo Sam, he says.

For the Cebu restaurant, they will introduce eight to 10 dishes that will use locally known ingredients. These include danggit and lampoon among others.

Keeping true to their promise of serving food using high-quality ingredients, Lopez says they source materials from reliable suppliers. All of it is used by *frying while Japanese local chefs* and Filipinos not eateries are used for the dishes.

She says they use tiger prawns (not the white shrimps) for the tempura and sashimi the freshest cuts for sashimi and sushi.

While Sumo Sam is the resto's first "baby," Magdalaya says they also opened their doors between 2007 and 2009 to expand in restaurants offering traditional Japanese and international cuisine.

These restaurants are John and Yoko (cosmopolitan Japanese cuisine) in Greenbelt 5; Marciano's (Italian fine dining) in Greenbelt 3; and Mr. Kurosawa (European-Japanese cuisine) in Quezon City and Pasay City.

"We provide variety. What we want to achieve is for people not to be afraid of Japanese food. That's why all items have pictures so they will see how the food look like," says Magdalaya.

Design lowers cost and raises company performance

By Brenda Adiao
Correspondent

COMPANIES invest so much money in training, not just for the trainers' salaries, but also for the time the employees spend attending training rather than working. But how do these companies know for sure that the people being trained are actually learning what the company needs them to learn?" asks Acni Tiotuo, a former professor at the Asian Institute of Management, specializing in Human Resources and Learning Methodologies.

Answering her own questions, she says, "Much of the time, the companies don't know. Some of them presume that just because people are attending training, they are learning something."

Any of us who have attended school would know that sitting in a classroom and learning are completely different.

That's where instructional design comes in.

Instructional design, Tiotuo explains, shows you how to prepare your training programs so that people can effectively learn what you want them to learn. It also lets you evaluate the quality of the training programs prepared by your trainers.

This is the service that Learning & Performance Partners, Inc. (LPPI), provides to its clients.

This company, which Tiotuo heads, has done instructional design for some of the biggest companies in the Philippines and abroad... and it is changing the landscape of how training is designed, implemented and evaluated.

"Frequently, when a trainer plans what to teach, the content is based on what he wants to share, which may not match what the target audience needs. The contents of a training program should be based on:

(1) what the trainees already know,

(2) what sort of performance you want to see in the trainees after the program, and

(3) what the trainees need to learn to attain that performance level."

Tiotuo unusually worries that after she had trained companies in traditional design, their rate of rejection of training programs proposals ballooned.

ABM Tiotuo

TNDMAS at the UN training in Chad. She has done instructional design for some of the biggest companies in the Philippines.

This is because training staff are more knowledgeable in identifying what their company needs and how to evaluate training proposals.

Through this more active partnership with trainers, the companies end up with much more effective and engaging training sessions.

Tiotuo emphasizes the word: effective. "How many of us have attended seminars that were very engaging but, at the end, left us asking ourselves, 'So what exactly did I learn, and how can I use it to improve my work and life?'" Tiotuo asks. Engagement while important is not the end-all of training programs. Instructional design ensures that even before training begins, the participants already know what will be taught, why it is being taught, and what new things they are expected to be able to do after the training is over.

But there is one last important consideration for companies: instructional design.

"The truth is, instructional design is an old educational concept," Tiotuo says, "but there is one thing that makes our work different from the instructional design that is found in the academe: Learning & Performance puts special emphasis on the benefits for the company and on how learning should help the trainees perform better. We work with the companies to understand their unique situation and determine their needs."

ABM Tiotuo, a former professor at the Asian Institute of Management and specializing in Human Resources and Learning Methodologies, now heads Learning & Performance Partners, Inc.

For bigger companies who need a more structured and systematic approach to talent development, Tiotuo describes the concept of a corporate university.

"You have different courses for employees with different goals and needs. The corporate university is not just a laundry list of courses: it is designed and organized based on the training requirements of employees, such as competencies. And because time is money, the training programs are designed in a manner that establishes smooth progression, minimizes overlaps and ensures what employees have learned," she says.

Tiotuo admits that designing such courses take time; it could take as much as six to twelve months to establish a corporate university.

"But companies who have corporate universities know for marketing reasons. They realize that it is a worthwhile long-term investment if you design your program well right at the start rather than muddle through for years, spending time and effort that result to very little returns/performance rates," she says.

This is where Tiotuo's years of experience and expertise in her field can be of help. Although her company has support staff, she ensures her clients that it is Acni Tiotuo herself who will be dealing with them and working with them to help them reach their corporate training goals.

To learn more about Tiotuo and her company Learning & Performance, Inc., visit www.learnperformance.com. E-mail her at atiotuo@learnperformance.com.

BUSINESS Monday

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FIRST PINAY COUNTRY MANAGER

A post that broke the gender barrier

UNITED Airlines, the world's leading airline, is considering flights to the Philippines from Guam and Palau in a bid to sustain its presence in the Asia Pacific region.

In a recent press conference, United officials announced its plans to continue to serve the Philippines as the merger between United Airlines and Continental Airlines is finalized worldwide.

When the merger has been completed, the two airline companies will be represented in the Asian region under a single United brand.

United Philippine country manager Cherlette Ty says United's success in maintaining service to Philippines is an indication of the company's confidence in the existing business climate in the country.

Ty was appointed United Philippine country manager last Oct. 1 from her previous posting as United general manager for Vietnam.

"United sees a Filipina to be back home for its rebirth following the merger of United and Continental airlines," says Ty. "We are very happy to make things happen here. It is not everyday that you put together two giant carriers and make them into one."

United's interest in the Philippines as a destination comes from the fact that country offers a unique market unlike others in the region.

"We bring in a lot of revenue Filipino travelers from the United States. We carry a lot of them," Ty adds. "We are privileged that they choose United when they travel. We also carry them from the United States to Europe. It is our workers that keep the Philippine economy moving."

The United Philippine country manager sees a number of opportunities in the Philippines and around the Asia Pacific region. The carrier is hoping to tap into the country's leisure market to see Guam as a destination the way they consider Hong Kong.

"Filipinos love to travel, and we're there to supply that need," she says. For 2012, United has set a target of 10 percent growth from its business in the Philippines in 2011.

Ty started her aviation career from the ranks of Pan Am, eventually rising to the position of Station Manager. She moved to United Airlines in the same position in 1998 when it purchased Pan Am's trans-Pacific operations. She demonstrated strong leadership during the planning and launch of United Airline's service in 1986. In 1996, she was appointed United Airlines country manager for the Philippines, the first time a Filipina female executive was named to the position.

When United Airlines resumed operations in the Philippines, Ty moved to the United States and held key management positions in various departments including Martha's California reservations and corporate security at United's world headquarters in Chicago. In 2004, when United started online services in the USA Mish City, Vietnam, she was tapped to lead the operational strategy.

Ty considers her appointment as United Airlines Philippines country manager in 1996 to be a milestone not just for her career but also for all female executives in the aviation industry. "Traditionally, male expatriates held positions for airline country managers. Her appointment to the post broke this gender barrier.

When asked what she brought to her position that male executives didn't, she quipped, "Charm."

She says her present position to be the pinnacle of her career in the aviation business.

"As in any career, you can be the highest if you do have that passion and the ability to think out of the box," Ty says. "There is he even more creative now I cannot just rely on what worked for me 15 to 20 years ago."

United flies 11 flights weekly out of Manila, of which nine are to Guam and another two to Rota, Palau. From Guam, travelers may fly direct to Honolulu or to other points in the US mainland.

Ty says Continental has served the Philippines market for a long time.

UNITED Airlines country manager for the Philippines Cherlette Ty with Koji Nagata, director for communications Asia Pacific

"We hope to grow that business even more," she says. "When the opportunity presents itself, we might further expand our operations."

She says following the merger, United has decided to invest about an additional $500 million dollars to rebrand products on its US-based fleet that would make the carrier the most competitive in the world.

These improvements include: United seating an A2 additional long-haul aircraft, raising the total of flatbed seats to 100, more than any other US carrier; introducing an in-economy Plus services that offer five extra inches of legroom and Channel 9 air traffic control audio in more than 300 aircraft; readying the overhead storage space on more than 120 aircraft; installing advanced broadband Wi-Fi on more than 300 aircraft; introducing streaming wireless video on board its mainline fleet.

With the completion of the merger between United Airlines and Continental Airlines by the end of the year with the issuance of a single operating certificate from the US DoA, United will have the world's most comprehensive global route network, including world-class international gateways in Asia and Australia, Europe, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East with nonstop or one-stop service from virtually anywhere in the United States.

aboitiz

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

We would like to inform the public that Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. (AEV) and Aboitiz & Company, Inc. (ACO) sold all of their ownership interests in, and control over all operations and management of ATS Consolidated, Inc. (formerly Aboitiz Transport System (ATSC) Corporation) in favor of Negros Navigation Co., Inc. on December 28, 2010. AEV and ACO have no responsibility for any and all transactions of ATSC since said date.

NN · ATS

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Included in the sale were the following companies:

1. ATS Consolidated Inc., formerly Aboitiz Transport System Corporation
2. ATS Express, Inc., formerly Aboitiz One, Inc.
3. ATS Distribution, Inc., formerly Aboitiz One Distribution, Inc.
4. Hansa Meyer-ATS Projects, Inc., formerly Aboitiz Projects T.S. Corporation
5. Kerry-ATS Logistics, Inc., formerly Kerry Aboitiz Logistics, Inc.
6. ScanAsia Overseas, Inc.
7. Hapag-Lloyd Philippines, Inc.
8. Supercat Fast Ferry Corporation

Also included in the sale were the following brand names.

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Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan Arts and Books Editor Lito B. Zulueta

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

Dom Bernardo Maria Perez, Benedictine monk and vernacular architecture expert, comes home

FATHER PEREZ, OSB (June 2, 1933–Nov. 11, 2011)

Rodrigo D. Perez III researched, experienced and learned what it was that made Filipino architecture so unique in the world, architecture that is appropriate to Filipino culture, way of life and environment

WE WERE the two youngest resident, summer apprentices gathering life experiences in an architectural office.

Youngest in relatives, Bobby was a generation old- er than me but we, the baby architects at the Louise Lorzie office, became fast friends.

Our tables were side by side at the back of the studio where we thought nobody would notice us and see how we were so outdated but at the same time necessary to be there.

This was, after all, our first job, and all the other people in the room were pros, no longer the teach- ers and students we had been used to being surrounded with.

DOM BERNARDO / C1

PRIDE OF PLACE

Architecture & Tillahan

Experiencing Picasso in real space—in Manila

By Constantino C. Tejero

"REMBRANDT and Woman with a Pot," by Pablo Picasso, Jan. 11, 1934

PHOTOGRAPH BY RONALDO M. FERNANDEZ COLLECTION, ALCONEDAG CHOICE / CONTRIBUTING ED.

HARDLY EVER does a museum exhibition in the country this year to be a re- sponse.

Ongoing until Jan. 7, 2012, in the Gu- bernya Bangko Sentral of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila in Roxas Boulevard is "Suite Vollard: Pablo Picasso 1930-1937," 100 prints on vellum paper and laid Montval paper, organized by Fundación Mapfre, Fundación Santiago and the Met.

Although Picasso is a name known by all and sundry, only a few in this country have actually seen a Picasso. This draw- as the first provides an enchantingly "do-it- gether opportunity to experience works by Picasso in actuality, in real space"—said so many of them, crossing the entire length of the long gallery.

By general consensus, Picasso is consid- ered the greatest artist of our time (but postmodernists challenged only by his friend and rival Henri Matisse). It's been said that, had he not done any painting, his sculptures, graphic art, ceramics or de-

EXPERIENCING / C1

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January 7-15, 2012
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AyalaLand

Experiencing Picasso in real space—in Manila

From page C1

ages around still make him a major artist.

Through he was an Andalusian from Malaga, who still ended in Paris and refused to return to or exhibit his works in Spain while Francisco Franco was in power, he artist of any group or nationality would think of him as a foreigner. He is the granddaddy of them all.

The Oxford Dictionary of Art calls him "the most famous, versatile, prolific and influential artist of the 20th century" and succinctly describes his entire creative chaos: "Picasso's emotional range is as wide as his varied technical mastery. By turns raging and playful, his work is suffused with a passionate love of life, and no artist has more dramatically expressed the cruelty and folly of his fellow men or more vigorously celebrated the physical pleasures of love."

"DYAK/Woman," May 31, 1933; "Rape" 9, April 22, 1933

Historic-artistic testimony

All this is visibly illustrated in the "Vollard Suite"—copper engravings in various techniques (etching, burins, dry points, aquatints, color wash or a combination thereof) the Spanish master produced for the French art dealer Ambroise Vollard between 1930 and 1937.

This series of prints is considered one of the most important historic-artistic testimonies of the 20th century. It was acquired in 2008 by Fundación Mapfre, a nonprofit Spanish institution. President (then Alberto Manrique Martin) describes it as "the most important series of engravings of the first half of the 20th century."

Some of the prints, particularly the ones that served as studies for bigger paintings ("Woman Learning on Her Elbows," "Sculptures Viewed from Behind," and "Bearded Head"). Or illustrations for a storybook (the monotones "Winged Bull" accompanied by "Four Children").

Others appear to be mere doodles ("Bareheads and Female Heads"). But the acquisitions themselves turn more to reconstruct passages in the protagonist "Blind Minotaur Guided through the Night by a Girl").

Every piece is beautiful. The master's mastery of lines, from delicate fine to broad planes of wonder, is, of course, impeccable. The entire set on display at the Met is one of only two complete sets signed by Picasso.

"MINOTAUR Caressing a Sleeping Woman," June 13, 1933

It is a serendipitous show, a classic example of a happy accident. Fundación Mapfre had actually offered the Met an other exhibit, "Las Meninas 1957-1960." But since that show's trip has been delayed until mid-2012, the foundation offered a replacement. (The Met's board of trustees could hardly believe their luck.)

Dualism of his art

The exhibit is divided into sections according to themes. It is imbued with several mythic Pygmalion and Galatea; Oedipus and Antigone; Theseus and the Minotaur; the Amazons; the Hugs of Europa.

Layne Bound of Fundación Mapfre's Instituto de Cultura provides a thread guiding the viewer from section to section—ranging from Picasso's interpretation of sexual violence into artistic creation, to the dualism of his art, of light and shadow, the Apollonian and the Dionysian, the comic and the tragic, tranquil love and turbulent lust, classicism and romanticism-expressionism, Ingres and Tintoretto, seven and three.

By the entrance is the series "Vollard," with three plates. These sketchy portraits are Picasso's tribute to the man who gave him his first one-man exhibition; in 1901 (as well as the first exhibit of Matisse, in 1904; and the first important exhibit of Cézanne, in 1895). Vollard is famous as a champion of avant-garde art.

"Minotaur," with 27 plates, chiefly consists of classician line drawings of orgiastic dancers, drinkers, musicians with flutes and tambourines, the circus, nudes, acrobats. It ends bullfighters, startled bullocks.

The "Sculptor's" series, with four plates, looks cold in a formal sense. Bound points to the highly contrasting classic and expressionist lines in framing the figures, all in one frame.

In "The Sculptor's Studio," with 46 plates, the artist contemplates his creation with a goddess attitude (reinforced by the Ingres visage), and his model with an undertow of reticence (she is thought to be Marie-Therese Walter, Picasso's lover during the most heated period of his artistic life).

In "Battle of Love, or Rape," with five plates, the subtle emotions of the previous sections flown into sensual violence. This is a devastating section. One can only stare aghast at the portrayal of the creative force transmuted into sexual energy, as the woman is being overpowered by a monstrous satanical beast.

Tragic sense of life

The sense of tragedy pervades "The Blind Minotaur," with 31 plates. The half-bull, half-bull monster is a major motif in Picasso's art, appearing from masterpiece to masterpiece. Here he could be a representation of the artist himself, and the sculptor's studio has been remembered into the labyrinth and the bullring.

While the Surrealists see the Minotaur as the embodiment of the irrational and the superhuman, Picasso finds humanity in the monster, as Bound would have it, the animal instinct in every human being.

Without here, despite the mesmerizing he appears all too human in "Minotaur Caressing a Woman," "Dyak/Sic Sons with Minotaur," "Minotaur Contemplating a Sleeping Minotaress." He seems struck as an overwhelmed poignancy in "Blind Minotaur Guided by a Girl," "Wounded Minotaur," "Infirmed Minotaur" and "Dying Minotaur."

Bound points to the fertile grounds that nurtured Picasso's grotesque growths, in the process rounding up the exhibit. "The 'Vollard Suite' reflects Ingres-style classicism, a return to order, monumentality and balance that is also evident in figurations ... distortions of anatomy and representation but harm, through the figure of the Minotaur or the man who overpowers the girl to enact sexual abandon.

"The playgrounds of the 'Vollard Suite' is powerful cast and flow straight to 'Guernica,' which was produced the same year Picasso completed the engravings. 'Minotaurmachy' and 'Guernica' bear witness to the dark mood that invaded European society in the 1930s, from the Spanish Civil War to World War II."

Only a limited number of images from the exhibit has been released for publication. Art enthusiasts would have to go to the Met for the full experience, where the series of prints have been installed in progressive arrangement, that upon reaching the end of the gallery the art lover would feel like true-learning with rapture.

Dom Bernardo Maria Perez, Benedictine monk and vernacular . . .

From page C1

Those were the pre-computer days. Our work was very manual. For a while we seized drafting mistakes done by others. Or huge sheets of tracing paper taped on even larger drafting boards, sometimes we erased a few lines, other times we erased whole sections of drawings.

We joked about being the erasure department, until one day we were promoted to other tasks.

He went up in the architectural world and got in the stairs. He had to draw every angle and, visual, riser and balcony that would help us scale the product on all kinds of stairs, straight, folded and curved. Whoa. I thought.

I got to do bathrooms. With a pencil and a T-square, I had to draw and count every single tile on the floor and walls, product holders, basin fixtures, make sure everything was drained properly, draw towel racks and soap dishes.

Many years later, I admitted to him that I looked over my shoulder to envy thinking his advanced knowledge in things architectural got him to do such an important thing as stairs.

His reply was that he kept looking at me doing bathrooms, envying what he perceived then as my skill.

Bobby was not one to be envied. He was one to be respected.

He championed the cause for Philippine architecture in the days when nobody believed there was such a thing, as enamored we were (and still are) of Western-influenced design.

Before anyone was doing it, he translated the country's long list of churches, houses, urban districts and historic towns. He never stopped looking and writing about what he saw.

He went beyond seeing architecture but it's cause-and-effect on ordinary men in the historic, social and economic realities of an issue, which gave architecture relevance.

Environmentalist

An environmentalist before environmental consciousness became fashionable, Bobby went to the Cordilleras, looked at traditional houses and village, seeing how villages were positioned at the exact confluence where rice terraces met water source, rolling slopes and mountain valleys to protect the houses from the onslaught of nature.

He was interested in how Filipino dwellings responded to nature and how they reflected Filipino lifestyle.

He looked at the bahay na bato and informal settler housing; noticed how unlike they were from Western houses where each room is completely sealed off from the other. In the Filipino house, spaces were separated by a partition or curtain, allowing one space to run into another.

By throwing open wide double doors, bahay na bato bedrooms opened out and became part of living rooms in the daytime. An enclosed balcony (usually for the sister or grandmother of the house. Is functioned as a transition area between interior and exterior.

Interiors were transparent, spaces freely running into each other, allowing air and space to circulate freely. Walls were not enclosed all the way to the ceiling.

Just beneath the ceiling, a wide strip of carved wooden fretwork (calado) allowed air to circulate within the house. Like the bay'o' saw, which allows layers of space created with overlaps of gossamer pile clothing to permit air to circulate and cool the body.

Bobby preached the seminal work that examined informal settler housing, the living patterns within each dwelling; the interconnected dwellings that made an informal neighborhood; and the invisible, transparent boundaries between families and their neighbors.

Bobby saw more than the transparency intrinsic in the Filipino psyche.

He researched, experienced and learned what it was that made Filipino architecture so unique in the world, architecture appropriate to the Filipino culture, way of life and environment.

Educator

However, the best thing was how he selflessly communicated all his discoveries about Filipino houses and life in the Philippines. He wrote papers, organized exhibitions, wrote articles and books on art and architecture, and was bestowed national awards for his work.

Bobby didn't really teach, but despite never having done formal classroom lectures, his educated protégés of architecture. To them he is the respected icon that has made apprenticeship under a Filipino the way to look to the future.

A Benedictine monk, Dom Bernardo Maria Perez, OSB, became rector of San Beda College. Everyone knew him as Fr. Bobby. Before the priesthood, he also was a journalist and writer for major Manila newspapers. A Filipino introduced to the Byzantine Dance Company.

He graduated from University of Santo Tomas with an architecture degree. He signed his columns on Architecture and essays on architecture and art as "Rodrigo O Perez III."

Last month, Bobby was in the hospital for a few weeks. As his mom was packing and getting him ready to return to the Benedictine abbey, he told Bobby it was time for him to go home.

Bobby said yes, and went home.

E-mail the author at pride.place@gmail.com.

Sena, UE Fine Arts alumnus, receives QC gov't award

PAINTER AND teacher Bernardo S. Sena, a 1974 BS Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate and former faculty member of the University of the East College of Fine Arts, received the Quezon City government's Gawad Parangal recently.

Issued during QC's 72nd founding anniversary, the award is the highest recognition given by Quezon City to outstanding residents and institutions.

Conferring the awards were Mayor Herbert Bautista, Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte and anniversary-steering committee head Aldrin Cunha.

Aside from Sena, awardees included Fr. Joaquin Bernas, SJ, activist-teacher Fuentes Corpuz; ABS-CBN personities Charo Santos-Concio, Gabby Concepcion, Cliff Felipe (posse); broadcast journalist Cho-Cho Lazaro; comedian Rodolfo "Dolphy" Quizon; entrepreneur Ramon Bodegon; singer-actress Lea Salonga; and educator Jose Ateneo.

4 exhibits close West Gallery's 2011 season

WEST GALLERY ends 2011 with four concurrent exhibits.

In "Mindanao noche Oriente, That Time Last Year," Eden Sanchez seeks his subjects to all for him and help him express the longing and the anxieties brought by human alienation. His exhibit is a recollection of thoughts, fragmented memories, house scenes, notions, and shared stories, thus "forming a psychological drama that depicts basic human desires and emotions."

Erik Sawyer tries to reconnect us to our childhood in "Something Greater than the Sum of Its Parts," where he draws his subjects from old low-resolution, found, personal photos of his niece's "whimsical, bizarre, and often inspired designs," using building blocks, Legos, and geometric toys.

Luis Santos, in his first one-man exhibit, focuses on contemplated skulls, which he transforms into phenomenal images in framed wood, oil pastels in "Studio Ink "the interior."

Carlos Imson's first one-woman exhibit, "Invitations from the End of the World," tackles "inevitably" from the point of view of an outside observer. Her works unfold images of a seemingly

"UNTITLED," by Erik Sawyer

Art world with all the symmetry of its postmodal inhabitants.

West Gallery is at Mary Stevens Art Center, 40 West Ave., Diliman City. Call 4113036 or 4119223, visit http://www.west-gallery.org.

"ENDLESS," by Kaloy Sanchez

E-mail the author at pride.place@gmail.com.

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Sison at Rico Renzo

"Mondo Guerra," by Miguel Augusto Sison is a series of images and objects making light of traits ailed as citizens and consumers through graphic, formal and compositional representations. Sison is a graduate of Parsons School of Design, New School University, New York with BA degree in Fine Arts and Master in Sculpture in 1980. This is the artist's sixth one-man show. He describes his works as "all about world war and how representation changes your concept of art." "Mondo Guerra" will run until Jan. 6, 2012, in Rico Renzo Galleries at Cattle, Cad Kayo Maputi at 8982-0540 or 8927-2348/72, or e-mail www.ricorenzo.com

Ibarreta at Phat Wong

Artist Veronica Ibarreta portrays women and depicts everyday scenery. "Colors" is a series of images and objects inspired by the intensity of bird-dogs. The artist paintings are personal to the everyday encounter with different situations. With her colorful world, Veronica portrays her love for mixing color palettes. Veronica will exhibit at Phat Wong Asian Cafe and the exhibit is curated by Kikco Rocco Galleries starting Dec. 3, 6 p.m. The exhibit runs until Jan 30. Call Kayo Maputi at 8982-0540 or 8927-2348/72, or e-mail www.ricorenzo.com

Visual Arts

"HORSES," by Veronica Ibarreta

Del Castillo at Altro Mondo

"Unwanted Ides," by Anton del Castillo consists of environmental sculptural works and site pieces of oil, metallic leaf, wood, mannequin dolls, among other media, depicting scenes with that explore and render plastic concepts of chance, destiny, karma, risk, survival, Highlights of the solo show include a woman's pantsuit pulled by helium-filled balloons as the object floats in the air, a chaise on the edge of an overcast balcony, and a refined and contrived with industry elements that provide a delicate and elegantly whimsical depiction of "What Comes Around, Goes Around," "Unwanted Ides" opened Dec. 8, at 6 p.m. at Altro Mondo Arts Contemporanea at the 3/L, Greenbelt 5, Ayala Center, Makati City. The show runs until Dec. 22. For inquiries, call 829-9270 local 71, e-mail us at: info@altromondo.com.ph; and visit www.altroarsenio.com.ph.

"What Comes Around Goes Around," by Anton del Castillo

José Santos III at Silo Remedios, Rocos Nortz

Silo Remedios Art Projects and Silangan Foundations for the Arts, Culture and Ecology present José Santos III's "Break Free." The artist covers still-life painting from an unusual angle. Instead of the usual still-life of flowers and fruit, he goes beyond the surface of objects and symbolizes their core. He probes the theme of "coconut and rural," which is why he often adopts the device of wrapping objects to raise questions about their context. He longs to gather various objects from the household space to create intriguing juxtapositions that point to the underlying motivations of his art. For this piece, he suggests how everyday objects can become stories, histories or the travails and complexities of the real life, traces of a life lived. The exhibit will be show at the Centro Bisaya de Joaquin Luna Hall starting Dec. 10, 4 p.m., at Silo Remedios. The recreational village typical of the mid-'60s in Dao Island, Davao Oriental. E-mail silo_remedios@yahoo.com, or visit www.silosremedios.com.

"READY for Hanging," by Joel Santos

Group exhibit at Art Informal

"It Doesn't Snow in Manila," a group exhibit, will run Dec. 13-31, at Informal LTV Commercial St., Greenbelt 5, 1500 Makati city. The show presents photographs, paintings, drawings, illustrations, collages by Vic Balaton, Allan Balisi, Charles Buenconsejo, Mariano Ching, Lena Cobangbang, Mike Cruzcosmo, Dino Gabaldon, Maria Jessa, Sam Kronemann, Jacob Linda, Pam Martinez, Ian Quirante, Albert Su, Marvin Tejos and Costantino Zicarelli.

ARTWORK by Dino Gabo

Manait at Art Verito

"Dream Abeng," photographs by Jomes Manalo inspired by José Rizal's novel Dec. 10-Jan. 7, in Art Verito CR-06, 2/F, Shops at Greenbelly, Benildo's High-Chaliet, Joguig, tel. 729.0182 or e-mail info@artverito.net.

Tom Epperson's abstract photomontage

By Margo C. Enriquez
Correspondent

AN ARTIST BY heart, veteran photographer Tom Epperson makes his eye's images and shapes the world according to his vision.

His latest works explore the photomontage, a series of photographs of common scenes such as trucks and paints on the roads and walls. They are taken from different angles, light exposures and at different times. By arranging and overlapping them, sometimes using Photoshop, he is able to transform the shapes and textures into seamlessly blended, graphic abstractions.

"It's about 40 to 80 photographs—cement, parking lot, construction site, cars with lettering, a wall. I photograph, go home and join them together as in a puzzle," says Epperson. "I took the things that we don't pay attention to; we don't give them a second thought; deconstruct and reconstruct them."

Epperson's favorite work is a photocollage of the pastries influencing also the car that sounds in a Mondrian-like play of squares and rectangles in different sizes done in a restrained palette.

The photographer says he was inspired by two artists. When he was in Batanes, he was impressed with the art of Pacita Abad, with her playful collage of squares and circles in vivid colors.

A earlier since he was 11, Epperson also admires architect Wolfgang Blaich who integrates various media to produce mixed paintings that transform ocean waves, sea skies into colorful fantasies of color and shape.

The once noted long one to interpret something else," explains Epperson. "His works were also the inspiration in the way he breaks things up and creates them into shapes. There's no Photoshop outside of the fact that I took the photos and pieced them together."

Epperson draws an abstraction of black and white shapes from the textures of the street with washes of yellow which were in real life yellow flowers on the road. "It's got a nice Japanese feel and there's no right ways to do it."

With his keen eyes, he would photograph the distressed surfaces of the burial corners on the road, noting steel and black spots on the white road to make unusual yet very quieting patterns.

One of his most popular works were a deconstruction of stamps. He took several of them in various expansions on a snappy day such no three. The black-and-white composition of these skeletal faces looked like pen-and-ink strokes.

The works took him two years from concept to production. While taking photographs, Epperson would be patrolled by the security guards asking if he had a permit to shoot. "I'm photographing the road," he would retort.

Working on an image took several days to perfect. Majority are three-feet by-three feet. To really enjoy these photocollages, you need to see them up close, as they are in a large format.

Their impact is derived from the sense of space and minimalism.

Epperson plans to do another experiment using the men of the walking man in the pedestrian traffic light. "You figure out how to put things together and the palette will be red, blue and black."

A few months earlier, Epperson ventured into another theme inspired by a trip to Mongolia and its bronze labor. He find positioned images of frozen flowers floating on ice. Businessmen Manuel Crespo was mentioned by the subject that he purchased his work.

One day a gallery-owner from New York flew to Manila to scout for talent. After visiting the galleries, nodding had caught his fancy until he had dinner with Crespo who showed him Epperson's works.

The owner invited Epperson to exhibit at the Tyler Address Fine Art gallery with the theme of cultural images found in city.

Although an American, he has been living in the Philippines for over decades and it married to a Filipina, cohesion and style mastery Aemi Epperson. As in his photocollages, he used familiar objects and Filipino symbols, such as the fan, rosary, sampaguita, Anthong and toys and from them to a temperature below 12 degrees, hence the title "12 Below."

As these objects were interested in blocks of ice, the deflection of a single light source made the object seem alive, as if floating on layers of broken prisms. The setup made most impact as the viewer is confronted to look into their meaning.

One of the most striking works is "Ti. Hetsura ng Kasiraan" Fraser's Eudaich; a ring of gray hair used by men. When silver-haired women saw his photo at the New York gallery, they engaged Epperson in a conversation about its purpose and size.

In New York, the exhibit was incomplete on samples landed on it they were floating on the wall, as if echoing the quality of photographs.

The exhibit was also shown at the Nova Gallery. "Each object acquired a different process," says the photographer. Jesus's Barbie doll was supported by counterweights; the Chrysler car was rigged and wobbles were glued so they wouldn't sink.

"You have to freeze a block of ice, pour marbles and another block of ice. It's the way I do it. I put the marbles in, removed and the ice broken. There were supplements in."

For his next collection, Epperson further shows his mastery of technique in artistic effort by capturing the obscure quality of smoke and preserving it in a manner that surprises the viewer.

Epperson's photomontages are on view at the Nova Gallery, Unit M-05 Metrowave, Tagaytay. 2301 Chino Roces Ave. Extension. The "12 Below" works could be added at the Nova Gallery, Bitterbaum 324, La Fuerza Compound, 2241 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City.

4th-quarter report card in the performing arts

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

BUILDING ON the successful formula—time-honored Filipino music, new dance—of his earlier "Harana," the Philippine Opera Company (POC), led by soprano Ria Gonzalez, came up with "Ang Bagong Harana" (POC Plaza's Carlos P. Romulo Theater), creatively written and directed by Floy Quintos.

And what do you know: The second show outpaced the first!

The new "Harana" ran the gamut of classical music (Alcántara and Santiago), novelty and hi-jinks ("Waray-Waray," a tribute to the iron hybrida Town), OPM, and patriotic anthems. It was a fitting tribute to our

Musical treats of the year

musical heritage, entertaining and ultimately inspiring.

And the 12 formally trained singers of POC showed—once again that they could dance almost as well as the more professional Ramon Obusan folkloric dancers (subscriptioned with them).

The 12 are Twinkle Perez, Al Camacho, Jamie Saenz, Hoard Vera, Jorgen Greenberg, Lawrence Jarayna, Jack Salud, Nanet Salcedo, Mardee Santiago, Marvin Guyamoso, Charley Magalit and POC artistic di-

4THQUARTER.DC

Foreign nationals flock to Calbayog City for classical-music concert

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

THE SECOND season of the Samar International Music Festival lived up to its name, with some foreign nationals attending the concert of baritone Andrew Fernando, Pianist Christopher Deacon and pianist Mary Anne Espina checking in Calbayog City Hotel in Calbayog City, Western Samar.

After a long drought of live opera music, Calbayog got to hear arias from Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro," Bizet's "La Traviata" and Bellini's "Il Pirata" song with fervor by Fernando.

The Broadway section had me a few in the audience singing with Fernando in his rendition of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Some Enchanted Evening" from "South Pacific."

Deacon's rendition of "Etudes" got hearty applause, and the audience hushed the floor was just on the same level as the piano and violin.

Espina...laboring through an upright piano which came all the way from Catarman City—tried to make the instrument sing. She flew in tonight from Cleveland, Ohio, where she is finishing her doctorate in piano performance at Cleveland Institute of Music. Espina's technique and solid musicianship made up for the inferior instrument.

With the concert ending with Fernando's beautiful rendition of "Silent Night," the audience was in a trance. It was evident from the happy faces the concert was the best musical gift they had in a long time.

"I didn't expect to watch a concert of this high caliber in this place," said Japanese music lover Toshikazu Fujiwa, who ended up buying a ticket after hearing the afternoon rehearsals before the performances.

It turned out there were Japanese, Korean, Australian and Italian nationals in the audience composed mainly of the leading citizens of Calbayog City such as Calbayog Bishop Isabelo Abaquin; Nicolas Chan and his mother Agnes; Calbayog Art Association head Armando Tolosa and his family; Ronald Rockey (representing Mayor Ronald Aquino); dancechers of the late mass icon of Bating Ang Chen Gomez; and members and staff of Christ The King Youth Orchestra led by Carl Jim Abon.

Also in the audience was Mayor quinkerpreson Fernando Reyes, who had visited former Calbayan editor Ernesto Acosta in the nearby Calbayog subprovincial jail.

"We helped broke this concert possible to make Calbayog City a regular cultural destination in the part of the Visayas," said Chan, echoing remarks before the concert.

Earlier, Chan hosted a sumptuous lunch for the artists and party in his beautiful home called Hidugang Gardens. He another sealed and, for some, we had a taste of the glorious cuisine of late generation now lost in the proliferation of fast food chains.

He also visited the studio of painter Armando Tolosa, head of the local art association.

"I am a product of the School of Hard Knocks," said Tolosa, whose paintings reflect the artistic sensibility of the place.

At the Chinese Hotel lobby during the concert, there was an exhibit by painter Noel Ungarap.

"We really enjoyed this concert so much," said Indian national Pranee Pandit and his wife Grace.

With Chan accommodated here, it was obvious that support given to the concert by Rep. Mel Senen Sarmiento, Mayor Aquino, Chan and Cirunce Hotel had cast bows to visit.

If we find the same generous sponsors next year, pianist Oscille Licad will shine the Samar Festival with a recital on March 27 in the same venue.

Along with the Licad concert, I hoped there will be an exhibit of Calbayog-born artist Raul Isidro and a screening of a film by Chito Roño.

There are enough proof Calbayog artists are world-class.

"I hope you bring Lina Sibarzin Dardo once more," said a beaming Bishop Abaquin after the concert.

"Only the effort of Ms. Chan can decide that," I told His Excellency.

Upon knowing the Calbayog Hotel was a bit of here, Lina sent the good bishop an autographed copy of her biography.

I took a good look at the Calbayog Convention Center and realized the bishop's dream ballet performance might become possible.

MAESTRO Armando Tolosa, head of Calbayog Art Association (left) plants Mary Anne Espina checking upright piano with Catarman pianotuner Vic Panisa before the concert

FEATFEST Christopher Deacon with young fans from Samar

FEATFEST Deacon, pianist Mary Anne Espina and baritone Andrew Fernando

4th-quarter report card in the performing arts

MICHAEL Butaong as Pedro Banzuan; John Dizanpoc as Pedro Sulay; Ivan Nuyi as Don Filipe; Ralph Perez as Gobernadorcillo; Greg de Leon as Kapitan Tiago

Another major area—operatic ballet—was in her middle years, as she "Swans" CCP Complex, before a discerning crowd of almost 3,000.

The awesome 32 fouetés were transformed into dazzling whiplash turns and spins— with passion. But the effect on the fans was just as electrifying. May ang ex-pro kita'i still go it.

More arias, please

PBT's 'Nutcracker' to be restaged at Meralco

SCENES from "The Nutcracker"

LIKE THE MOVIE "A Wonderful Life," the magical "The Nutcracker" ballet has become one of those traditional heralds that the Christmas season is upon us.

The Philippine Ballet Theater (PBT) has fostered the universal tradition with the staging recently of the beloved ballet at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) in Pasay City.

The weekend run was fun not just for the dancers onstage but for the audience, as well. Proud parents and other relatives basked in awe and admiration as their children presented and adorably leaped onstage. For many of the young dancers, performing onstage and in front of an audience for the first time was as much performance as play.

Among the highlights of the show was the gracefully-executed "Waltz of the Flowers," featuring fifty and leaps to a goddess of enchantress' flowers to the delight of the audience. The Spanish and Chinese dances of Ballerinas and Joshua Mendoza, and Sasha Hayashi and Ricky Contreras were highly-entertaining.

Tiffany Mangubat-Ang Liderazating with Bianca Trevino) was a delightful Dew Drop Fairy. Remarkable in its flawless execution was the dance of the "Russian" boys—Mathew Davis, Mark Pineda and Jeff Contreras—who thrilled with grizzly-defying leaps, and breathtaking pirouettes.

The dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy by Lyka Pimentel, a Saysay dancer scholar, was also beautifully executed, featuring several sequences of pirouettes. The grand pas de deux, performed by Pimentel Liderazating with Veronica Reyes and Maxime Ryl, and her Nutcracker Prince, Peter San Juan Liderazating with Leonard Capol, was a fitting and spectacular ending to this magical show.

No doubt for young members of the audience it was a fun and inspiring introduction to ballet. It will not be surprising if, by the time they left the theater, they themselves have started to dream of going onstage someday to dance to the cheerful music of the Nutcracker.

The young dancers were ably supported by friends and family members of PBT and Saysay Foundation, who had an inside line onstage as they gamely played supporting roles in the young stars. In their first Nutcracker performance, they played doting mom and uncles, adoring grandparents and other comical roles.

Artistic director Boni Antonio and the choreography of Michael Chernov and Ochoy Bildiard to stage a lively, magical show complete with elaborate costumes, fancy stage props and special effects, and beautiful backdrops. It was a suitable showcase for the young and talented dancers of PBT, ably supported by young dancer-scholars and actors of the PBT Dalawah Program of Saysay Foundation and guest dance scholars of the Quezon City Performing Arts.

After the successful staging of the last production of the 2011 season of the PBT, which reorganized recently, the "Nutcracker" will have another showing to accommodate those who missed the CCP performances. On Dec. 13-15, 7 p.m., at the Meralco Theater, Ortigas Ave., Pasig City.

The Dec. 14 show will be a special gala performance to benefit the MVP Foundation scholarship program. It will be presented in cooperation with Cultural Center Management and Infinity powered by Smart.

Tickets are available at the PBT office, Backstage, Meralco Theater, Ortigas Ave., Pasig City. Call 6326840.

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Call 759-8888 to order and go for the Big Shot!

OMF Lit holds nationwide book sale

OMF LIT BOOKSHOPS, which offers books that bring inspiration, interaction and insight, is holding the sale, "I Read. I Gift. The OMF Lit Christmas Sale," on Dec. 14-20, in all of its 10 branches nationwide.

Aside from getting 20 percent off on all OMF Lit books, buyers can also enjoy the following:

- Kultigan Card and Partner Rewards cardholders get 30 percent off on Dec. 14-16;
- Facebook fans and Twitter followers get 30 percent off on Dec. 17 when they download the special coupon;
- Special book bundles for Hiyas book order and selected OMF Lit titles;
- Selected books at P50, P75, P99 and up to 50 percent off;
- Thirty percent off on Hiyas from Dec. proceeds of which will go to the Jollibee MaAging Pako project;
- Author signings, free in-store sending the most recent for your

kitchen experience more fun.

Sold Me To Be Friend" by Sue Lee Lepaje-Muñoz is for young people who want to make the most out of online and offline friendships.

"Your Mom Dancing" is the compelling true story and faith journey of the "Feed Jeaters of the Philippines," Nestor de Mesa, as told by his son Gerby Soriano.

"Solo Flight" by Grace D. Chang and Francis Cassandra Lavendar features stories about ladies who took different routes in their search for meaning and significance as they explored life in single women.

"Pass or Fail" by Ronald Molmisa draws practical and easy-to-do tips to high school and college students on how they can be the best student ever.

Hiyas, OMF Lit's imprint for children's books, features three new titles. One "The Great Duck and Chocolate Race" by Robert Magnuson teaches young kids how to get along while playing with others. Joyce Pisig-Cu's "Bee Safe," the first in the Little Bee Book series, shows children how they can be safe wherever they are. She is back with "Oh Mateo I Lt. You for All" by Grace D. Chong, and this time, he learns how to take care of his environment.

Call OMF Literature at 5114655/ 5114141. E-mail to: gracie@OMFLit.com or visit OMFLit.com.

Homebuyers get a taste of prime living at Avida Towers Primea Taft launch

AVIDA LAND CORP. treated guests and homebuyers to a taste of premiere comfort, security and convenience with all the perks of urban living at the recent launch of Avida Towers Primea Taft in Pasay City.

Last December 5, Avida Land unveiled its newest condominium development in front of hundreds of guests at the World Trade Center. Participants at the Avida Towers Primea Taft launch learned valuable wisdom from business and financial guru Francis Kong, who gave a talk on "Living the Good Life".

Later in the program, guests were treated to a fun entertainment by beat-setting pop vocal ensemble, The Company. The group performed classic favorites and their original repertoire much to the delight of the audience.

The address of choice along Taft

Avida Towers Primea Taft could be the dream home for people who want to get the most out of their urban lifestyle. It features excellent amenities and retail area to make future residents' needs within their reach. Upon seeing that, the new project is also sure to attract investors who want to take advantage of the assured appreciation of value of the property.

And with Leasing Services by Avida (LSA), investors are offered a great business opportunity. Unit owners can avail the services of LSA and make their unit an income-generating asset by having it leased out.

Avida Towers Primea Taft has to definite advantages over the other developments in the area, including: 1) it proven track record when it comes to quality and prompt delivery; 2) the support of its parent company, Ayala Land, Inc.; and 3) the five condo must-haves that only Avida can offer.

Avida Towers Primea Taft is offering Studio, 1-BR and 2-BR units that will be delivered ready for occupancy. Amenities and services include a clubhouse, adult and toddler swimming pool with sunset deck, function rooms, open lawn and jogging paths, outdoor gym equipment and a study hall called "The Nook @ Primea".

The entire property is going to be managed, secured, and maintained by the renowned Ayala Property Management Corp., the same group that implements strict, high-quality standards in managing all Avida properties.

Supported by Ayala Land

Avida Towers Primea Taft is backed by Ayala Land, the premier real estate developer in the Philippines. Ayala Land is primarily associated with high-end projects, including central business districts, commercial centers, and exclusive family residences.

With support from Ayala Land, Avida is committed to transform the lives of the hardworking middle-class by offering quality, carefully planned, secure, and accessible communities at affordable rates.

The name "Primea" is derived from the word "prime," which means having the highest quality or value. True to its name, Avida Towers Primea Taft is a high-quality condominium that is designed to address the housing needs of its residents in the best manner possible.

An A+ Residence in Every Way

Avida Towers Primea Taft is planned and built with the five condo must-haves in mind: free-flowing air and sunlight, fewer units per floor, sensible amenities, emergency power in common areas and condo-wide/broad units, and easy payment terms.

These five must-haves are present in all of Avida's condominium projects and Avida Towers Primea Taft is no exception. The development allows for natural lighting and ventilation for a comfortable ambiance, has fewer units per floor for a more-exclusive feel, features practical amenities for more at enjoyment at reasonable maintenance fees, provides emergency power in all common areas as well as within each unit, and lastly offers payment terms that are easy on the pocket.

With the presence of the five condo must-haves, the proven track record of Avida Land in providing dream homes for Filipinos, as well as a solid backing from the Philippine's most trusted developer, Avida Towers Primea Taft is sure to stand out from the rest of developments in the area and will provide a peaceful refuge in an otherwise busy city.

For more information on Avida Towers Primea Taft and other Avida properties, please call (02) 848-2300 or visit www.avidaland.com.

Animation director revives 'Mission: Impossible' franchise

By Salvador Zulueta
Correspondent

SO WHY would a film producer like Tom Cruise pick an animation director for the lead third to helm the latest "Mission: Impossible" (MI) franchise, "Ghost Protocol"?

For one thing, most of the action movies Oscar days are full of hit and special effects that they are looking more and more like animation than live action.

Consider cars flipping over several times before crashing to miss the bowsley of a battleship; the hero/hero falling from a building and screwing around to shoot at the enemy above, zooming sword-light while the heroes are balancing on a slippery ship's mast in a storm.

To direct live action integrated with 3D requires you to acutely follow the plan of execution as prescribed in the storyboard. A previsualization of the shots using simple 3D models and environments are created to guide the live-action shooting as well as the effects people.

The control you practice in this kind of production integrating separate and varied elements within a shot, keeping them within the previsualized composition, is the same in animation production.

Except that in animation you can also control the acting of the characters.

No stranger to live-action

Bird is no stranger to live-action storyboarding, having co-written "Iron Giant," one of the most touching animated features made outside of the Disney Studios at the time.

All of Bird's three animation features were successful. He received an Academy Award.

In Bird's films you still find elements that suit "MI" (Mission Impossible), such as the Paris setting in "Ratatouille." In "The Incredibles," there's the self-destruct lipid; James Bondish elements like a supervillain with a private army; a volcano hideout; hi-tech gadgetry; '60s-influenced sets; a music score aping John Barry's music for the early James Bond films.

Bird has been praised by critics as an "American director with a comparably fluid visual style or such a vise grip on storytelling mechanics."

Bird also possesses to a high degree what can be termed as "visual wit." It is a quality you can find, especially in a Spielberg movie, as in "Raiders of the Lost Ark," where a poisoned dart, about to kill, in slow motion, straight into Indy Jones' mouth, is snatched at the last moment by his friend who just saw the dead monkey among the spilled dates.

In "Mission: Impossible," Tom Cruise crashes through a window, lands with his ass in the air into a gym of women doing yoga contortions, their asses also up in the air.

Animators are skilled in visual wit. They are constantly delivery punch lines and visual gags in the service moment to make a movie funny, heartfelt or just plain entertaining.

If Bird becomes more successful, it is hoped he would eventually direct a 2D feature again just to prove his own statement that it's the story and the character and not the medium.

Tim Burton

Besides Bird, the other well-known live-action director who started in animation is Tim Burton.

But Burton was not first. In the '50s there was Frank Tashlin who used to direct the fast and funny Warner Brothers' "Looney Tunes." You can imagine what his live movies are like, full of visual gags.

These days, animation directors continue to infiltrate live-action storyboarding. There is Rob Minkoff, who co-directed "Lion King," eventually directing "Stuart Little" 1 and 2.

Former director of "Farmer" Kirk Wise directed the Kate Atkinson comedy "Enchanted." Andrew Adamson, director of "Shrek" 1 and 2, went on to direct "The Chronicles of Narnia" 1 and 2.

Recently Andrew Stanton, the Academy Award-winning writer-director of Pixar's "Finding Nemo" and "Wall-E," just completed the live-movie version of Edgar Rice Burroughs' "John Carter of Mars."

As a fan of the original "MI" TV series, I will certainly not miss "Ghost Protocol," if only to see the traditional "MI" opening montage with the lighted fuse, to the unforgettable music theme by Lalo Shiffrin in its modern remix/reinterpretation. (I think the original still controls better).

For those who are too young to know, the original "MI" was a spy thriller rather than an action story. Thrillers you enjoy because of the suspense, the suspicion, the twist, and the reveal at the end. A thriller you enjoy with the mind, like chess.

In the "MI" TV series, you enjoy the ingenuity of the plan being executed, the plan being thwarted, the plan replanned and improvised in its triumphal completion. It's about teamwork, not a one-man show.

The original "MI" was an elaborate con game played on the criminals to get a doctor, a dictator of information, or to save disinformation so the enemy will end up killing each other.

Steven Soderbergh's "Ocean" 11, 12, and 13 come closest to the spirit of the original "MI" series because the series was also all about a team of experts assembled by a multi-equipment, executing an intricate plan that relied on the trickery of a con game to get hold of something valuable.

Hey, "Ocean's 13" even copied the earthquake-simulating machine from the original "MI" TV series.

BIRD Bird points the way for "Mission: Impossible," with Tom Cruise, Paula Patton and Simon Pegg at the Dubai International Film Festival, where "Ghost Protocol" premiered. Below, Cruise, against the Dubai skyline

Inside 'Jobs'

This comprehensive and compelling portrait of Apple founder and tech genius Steve Jobs reveals both his immense gifts and surprising flaws

By Rael S. Dy-Viva

A PERSON is famous when his or her name is enough to become the title of a best-selling book. A person is iconic when his or her image looking out at the reader on the cover is considered both intimate and a work of art. This holds true for the late American genius Steve Jobs, founder of Apple and the subject of the exhaustive and eye-haunting authorized biography, "Steve Jobs" by Walter Isaacson (Simon & Shuster, New York, 2011, 630 pages).

For it is easy, "Jobs" is the last, great project from the man who changed forever the relationship between technology and humanity by shepherding into reality the Macintosh, the iMac, the iPhone and the iPad, among other feats of design and invention. He made Apple ubiquitous.

Though John died last Oct. 5 at the age of 56 after battling pancreatic cancer, he made sure that his children—and perhaps the world—would know as much about him as possible. This is because it was John himself who partnered Isaacson—who had written respected biographies of great innovators such as Albert Einstein and Benjamin Franklin—to pen the biography. A befuddled Isaacson actually demurred twice until he found out that John was sick, eventually giving in. "Jobs" came out a few weeks after John's death.

REVIEW

What is clear is that Jobs afforded Isaacson unexpected access, doing more than 40 interviews even as Isaacson interviewed everyone he could find. The result is a comprehensive bio about a controlled train. "Jobs" is no praise job; in fact, it is surprising how unflattering the book can be at times, but that is the book's secret, as well. From the very beginning to the end, Jobs acquires and Isaacson takes note.

JOBS 43

PEN vows combat vs climate change

Writers commit to use power of the pen to save the environment

Text and photos by Doreen B. Matilla
Contributor

WHAT DO you get when you gather poets, playwrights, essayists and novelists in one room to tackle the issue of climate change?

You get words, lots of eloquent words.

Most of the words that overflowed during the 54th National Congress of the Philippine Center of the International PEN (Poets and Playwrights, Essayists, Novelists) at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) were expectedly foreboding, of course.

But the sense of portent was balanced by words of optimism, such as "survival." In fact, the exuberance tried to balance pessimism with optimism. It was not for nothing that the theme of the congress was "Archipelagic Points, Tropical Tensions: The Literature of Survival."

In his keynote speech, veteran fictionist Resty V. Dino tackled climate change and evoked the specter of ecological collapse because Philippine governments had not done anything about something they had recognized during the climate change summit in Copenhagen—that the average global temperature should not rise more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels by 2100, and greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere beyond 450 ppm.

"What are the likely impacts of this failure?" Dino asked. "The most worrisome for the Philippines is the calculations of glaciologists that an increase of 2°C would hasten the melting of ice sheets in Greenland, the Arctic and West Antarctica. Together, they hold enough water—but, if melted, would raise sea levels from 12 to 15 metres. Two hundred million people live within one metre of present sea levels, including eight of 10 of the world's largest cities."

In short, the Philippines would go under.

Dino urged writers to use the power of the pen to urge governments to implement measures to check carbon emissions.

In one panel, fictionist in Filipino Abdon Balde Jr. offered a more practical measure—for writers to cut down on using products that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

Balde said several environmental experts believed global warming was part of a 1,500-year wrinkles cycle and that the Earth had experienced much worse during the Middle Ages when automobile had yet to be invented and oil was yet to be discovered.

But while there may be disagreement, there's nothing wrong with taking cautionary steps so as to prevent disasters arising from climate change.

Congress resolutions

At a first step, the Philippine PEN's 54th Congress passed a resolution calling for measures "to bring down greenhouse-gas emissions in order to stem climate change and its disastrous effects on the biosphere."

"Taking the challenge made by writer Resty V. Dino in his keynote address of our 2011 Congress," said Leo R. Zulueta,

CLIMATE CHANGE 43

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. UPIN — BY JES MIRZA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PHIL LAMOR

DICK TRACY — BY JOE STATON AND MIKE CLARK

LOVE MOO'S — BY ELIZABETH HONG

BABY BLUES — BY JERRI SCOTT

RHYMES WITH ORANGE — BY HILARY PRICE

SEPH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

HUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN — BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TUNDRA — BY MARA CULL

HOROSCOPES

BY PEGGY DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You're in a good time to reach to the next. Where you're happy you are with your long-term relationships. Not a week to organize the world! **TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** You're in a romantic energy today. Because of this, you'll be attracted with creative, personable and attractive people. Be with your heart. You're ready to put this to your advantage.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Trust your accomplishments about today. Your ability to be a leader and your desire to take control are already here. You have a sense of wanting to put your stamp on life.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) It's a good day to work with others on a project that requires creative vision. You feel comfortable leading and ready for anything. But it is good day for someone to help you with the details, which aren't your forte.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Make sure you're not being too hard on yourself. Your self-esteem is high, and you're ready to take on challenges. But be careful not to overdo it. Remember, you're not perfect.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Group activities will go well today. Your ability to work with others is strong. Physical competitions and contests will particularly appeal to you. It's a good day.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) People will admire you today because you have so much energy. Furthermore, your bright demeanor makes you all the more appealing. Don't be surprised if you're asked to lead.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Make plans for love. Some time attention or everyday conversation is underway. Romance is in the air. You're popular!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You're positive that you're ready to take on a challenge. Your ability to be a leader and your desire to make a difference in your world. Make your best work!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Partners and close friends are unusually dynamic and energetic today. Be prepared for this. Also, you'll be able to achieve your own personal goals.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You're ready to get back on a relationship. You have a special way with people, and you're ready to make a difference in your world. Make your best work!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Your creative ideas are flowing today. You're surrounded by fun people, which is a fine combination. Enjoy good times with others.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more puzzles go to www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	2	6	4	5	3	1	7	8
4	5	3	7	8	1	6	9	2
8	1	7	2	9	6	4	5	3
2	9	4	5	3	8	7	6	1
1	7	8	6	4	2	5	3	9
3	6	5	9	1	7	8	2	4
5	3	1	8	6	4	2	9	7
6	4	2	1	7	9	3	8	5
7	8	9	3	2	5	9	4	6

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

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Difficulty Level ★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

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5 Weapon in France
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Book on Galicians in the Philippines to be launched at Holy Angel University in Pampanga

VETERAN SHOWBIZ journalist, José "Pepe" Rodriguez, and Pampanga historian Lino Bruce will launch "Crucero: Spanish Galicia as Some Crossroads in Philippine History and Culture," at Café Jesú, Holy Angel University, Angeles City on Dec. 13.

Using the Crucero, a tall cruise ship as the metaphor for the encounter between the province of Galicia, as itself, the book features the different facets of Philippine history and culture where the Galician influence has been enormously felt.

A Galician himself, Rodriguez is no stranger to the Philippines, having spent more than a quarter of a century in the country which he considers as a second home. He became regional bureau chief of the Spanish news agency Agencia EFE in the mid-'80s and later became director of the Instituto Cervantes, the Spanish cultural agency.

Bruce, on the other hand, is a Kapampangan and teaches at the Ateneo de Manila University and is historical consultant of the Center for Kapampangan Studies at the Holy Angel University.

Through the perspective of local and regional studies, the Crucero also serves the obvious: that the writers hope to achieve the fostering or encouragement of enduring relations between two cultures, those of the Philippines and Spain.

The Crucero is co-published by the Center for Kapampangan Studies and the Centro Gallego de Filipinas.

PEN vows combat vs climate change

From page E2

Philippine PEN national secretary who drafted and read the resolution, "we are specifically mentioning the developments of the summit of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change taking place in Durban, South Africa, up to Dec. 9. We expect it to come up with specific recommendations to address climate change that we will urge governments, especially of industrialized nations with the highest greenhouse gas emissions, to adopt and implement."

CARLA Pura, Marita Aleman, Alma Aranda-Carpio, Pranza Paz and Ricardo Soler

NOVELIST Antonio Enriquez (right), National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera and historian Ambeth Ocampo (center), who moderated the 2011 Jose Rizal lecture

PEN founder F. Sionil José's birthday cake. He's nine-0!

Battle plan

The resolution lays out the writers' battle plans against climate change.

"Since the issues revolving around the issue are technical and geopolitical, beyond the immediate comprehension of laymen and non-politicians," the resolution read, "we, as writers and artists, have the artistry and the obligation to make them immediate and compelling. Therefore, we vow to use the powers of the pen and the energy of the imagination to craft stories and humanize, painting them in more vivid terms and evoking their universal integrity.

"Through our verses, stories, reports and reflections, we will portray the disastrous consequences of severing the symbiotic ties that should exist between ecology and mankind.

"Writers allover yr. must against nature. Nature is depicted as impersonal and ruthless; man is represented as puny and defenseless. But it is more obvious from the destruction of the environment and the mounting effects of climate change that nature is the victim and man is the recreance. Through our writings, therefore, we will serve more warning to people of the need to change their ways or else face annihilation.

"Through our discursive and creative writings, we will invoke the need for the restoration of the proper equation that should obtain between man and nature. In this case, we will not only produce a literature of survival, which is the theme of our 2011 Congress, but also a literature of conservation."

Other resolutions passed include one urging the release of writer and political prisoner Jerson Aranes, as well as writers abroad especially monitored by the International PEN's Committee on Writers in Prison, in which the Philippine PEN Center holds a seat; another writer, urging the speedy trial of those behind the Maguindanao massacre of 2009, in which most of the victims were journalists and writers; and still another requesting the resolution passed during the 72nd congress in which the PEN vowed to work for quality literature education by working with similar work shops on literature pedagogy across the country.

Panel discussions

The panel discussions, which the PEN has pioneered, were as always, very engaging.

"I was able to attend the second day only," said one observer, "but I must say that was had amazing panelists, and the topic was so interesting and inspiring! In fact, I am now thinking of trying non-poetry, and it's so timely because I recently came from an out-of-town trip and experienced nature."

Panel topics and their writer-discussants were:

- Apocalyptic Literature: Disasters and Imaginations...Karina Bolasco, Antonio Enriquez, Gilda Cordero-Fernando, John Iremil Teodoro;
- Landscape and Personal Stories—Nicolás Pichay, Marne Kilates, Lourdes Roma-Tiamson, Mario Lance José Veloso;
- Surviving Calamities: History and Presentation—Rhoda Jacob, Rosario Cruz Lucero, Victor Peñaranda, Luna Sicat Cleto;
- Archeology in the Writings from the Boondocks—Jaime Medalla, Abdon Balde Jr., Cirilo Sevilla, Susan Evangelista, Frank Pelicano;
- Literature in Distress and Digital Media: Racism Stories, Charlie Samuya, Rolando Tolentino, Gary Devilles, Leonard Ryan Cervantes;
- Poesis and Resistance—Carlo Ibera, Ricardo Sales, Merlie Alunan, Alma Bacosa-Cacpio, Yvonne Tan.

The Jose Rizal lecture was delivered by historian and historian columnist Ambeth Ocampo, who discussed literature icons and images in Philippine currency.

"One could say that banknotes were a form of public history, or a document that expressed a given historical past as understood by the monetary authority," Ocampo said. "The use of historical figures or events on a banknote is an attempt to connect past and present to achieve relevance for the end user..."

"Next time you open your wallet, take time to study the details in the banknotes, reflect on the reasons for the design, and you will never look at money the same way again."

Birthday boys, bawdy jokes

Before the sessions closed, birthday cakes were brought out for Dec. and F. Sionil José, Philippine PEN founder and National Artist for Literature, who were celebrating their birthdays Dec. 2 and 3, respectively.

The usual rounds of announcements was also alleviated during the traditional PEN Salidumay dinner, which featured readings, bawdy humorous, by PEN members.

Feminist and current Shanda Inday cracked bawdy jokes and delivered double entendres. Jose made instinctorious folk-jokes. Dino emits Abdon Balde in

Young third-based poet Kristine Cordero recited eloquent verses. Novelist Charlson Ong displayed his vocal dexterity and betrayed his eclectic addiction.

The dinner at Dencio's in Harbor View across CCP also saw the launch of Mindanao-based Bienvenido Antonio Inquest's new novel, "The Survivors," published by the UST Publishing House.

The dinner was hosted by the Secretariat, the official student publication of the University of Santo Tomas, especially since the PEN elders—José and National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera, artist's client of the organization, have been proud alumni. The "destination unit" is hosted the dinner in connection with the 400th anniversary of UST this year.

As was reported from a gig hosted by the Secretariat, food writers have proved lovely clients for the poets and writers of the PEN to entertain their imaginative energies in each issues and fight climate change.

The 2011 Philippine PEN Congress was sponsored by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Anvil Publishing, Asia Foundation, Ateneo de Manila University, Ayuntamiento de Madrid, Instituto Cervantes de Manila, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Filipinas, Instituto Cervantes, Jar Imports, University of Santo Tomas, Myan Mo Park of the United Kuwait Community Association in the Philippines, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Tiki and the UST Secretariat.

FICTIONIST Rosy V. Diaz delivers the keynote address

PEN authors at NBS Bestsellers-Galleria

THE PHILIPPINE CENTER of International PEN (Poets and Playwrights, Essayists, Novelists) will hold the Meet the Philippine PEN Authors Forum on Dec. 13, 6-7:30 p.m., at NBS Bestsellers, Robinson's Galleria, Ortigas Avenue.

This forum features National Hall of Fame awardee and writer of children's stories Edgardo Maranan, poet Jose Maria "Sheko" Batlajan Lacuesta, essayist and poet Elizabeth Lalbarga, and fiction writer and playwright Jesus Francis Aliler. The writers will read from their work and talk about them easily.

Ms Anita del Mundo will serve as master of ceremonies.

This event is co-hosted by NBS Bestsellers and Anvil Publishing, and supported by PEN International in the UK and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Book lovers are welcome to the event.

PEN Congress at CCP Tanghalan Hall

Inside 'Jobs'

From page E1

Jobs' story a far from conventional, adopted after being abandoned by his American mother and Syrian father, Jobs grew up a smart, strange kid in California with an obsession with computers. Together with another genius, programmer Steve Wozniak, he would found Apple Computers, as well as the groundbreaking Pixar Animation Studios, becoming a multibillionaire in the process, and that was before he would up spearheading iEverything.

But Jobs was also an unpredictable, micromanaging perfectionist who could be manipulative and rude. Isaacson writes about what he called Jobs' "reality distortion field," Jobs' obstinate tendency to recast the inconvenient fact to his needs. "He absolutely believed that the normal rules didn't apply to him," one executive said. The book described Jobs' working style as suffering from "his typical empathy deficiency." He was a ruthless businessman and didn't get along with many people he worked with and most of the people he worked against. Microsoft's Bill Gates being a prime example. Another said that "the trait that most stands out in Jobs' mode is control freak."

Isaacson captured all this set against the development of the many technological innovations Jobs would champion. "Jobs' sometimes knee itself used the form of such talk but Jobs eventually emerges again in either a bad mood or in high spirits. There are emotional highs and depressing lows, and "Jobs" can become sarcastic, surly, as well. There is a lot to read here about both what Jobs accomplished and who he is, and believe it or not, the latter is actually more interesting. "He is not a model boss or human being, fully packaged for emulation," Isaacson wrote. "He has personality and emotions and products were all interrelated."

But this may exactly be what Jobs wanted when he initiated the book. He planned even this. After having premature loss that he would die young, Jobs wanted to be done touched by his technology to know of the fascinating, flawed person known by his/her Miyako (attributes, a visionary, as well as a "turbocharger." That book, too, is part of his legacy. A compelling portrait of a complex genius, "Steve Jobs" is an unflinching look at the man behind the iMac. Isaacson's biography that describes the enigmatic man on the book's cover, is life as iconic as that phone in your pocket and the book's cover. After all, Steve Jobs helped design that, as well.

Available in hardcover from National Book Store.

Flavored 'tabo' served at launch of book by Elvira Mata, who didn't show up

FURARU: Japanese sledgeperson Elvira Mata has published a book of essays written, she says, before she was hit by writer's block.

"Positively Mental (Stories Written on the Verge)" was recently launched with children's books at National Book Store's bestsellers to Robinsons Galleria. Illustrated tales was served and the author regrets that she was a no show.

She explains her failure to attend: "I have performance anxiety and this includes writing to public, which extends to glamping talks. A pity, as soya milk and chilled cake are some of my favorites."

Her publisher, Karina Bolasco of Anvil Publishing Inc., earlier decided to just send her 50 copies of the book, for prepping.

Although she didn't think even 50+ people would buy tales for relatives who want proof that she's well, married, she stamped all 50 with what appears to be cat's paw prints on the title page, and scribbled what appears to be her signature.

Her book is not a children's book, even if Elvira believes she was developmentally arrested at age 30—which explains her fascination for Grimm (you inevitably fairy tales and Barry Potter books, and her terse writing style.

In the "Introwriting," she explains: "The 50 essays in the collection were written between 1994 and 2009, when my life was going through various transitions—both working abroad to coming home pilipino to immigrating to Canada to coming home to take care of my father, who died soon after."

Most of the pieces were originally published in the column "Elevated Tales" in the Women's Journal under the pen name May Gone By. Two longish articles were published in Her World, a fashion magazine in Singapore.

She later says, Lilly and Him (not their real names), also wrote pieces on what it's like to live with a journalist on the verge of writer's block/burnout, one while attempting to quit, restart, and finally really end a relationship.

Some of the stories are funny; at least, that's what this's lowcutsive believes.

"Positively Mental: (Stories Written on the Verge)" is available at National Book Store and Bestsellers.

Formal archives education needed for heritage conservation

By Levine Lee
Contributor

LOCAL ARCHIVISTS and other record-keepers have committed to advance records management in the country while stressing the need to professionalize records-keeping by formal archives education in the country upon the conclusion of the 2nd National Archives Congress, Dec. 8-9, at the Colegio de San Agustin (CSA) in Bacolod City.

The meeting of some 300 archivists, librarians, university and college registrars, and representatives from the business sector from around the country granted several concessions, such as the lack of qualified professionals who could ably handle valuable documents.

The congress participants called for "the inclusion of records and archives management in the general subjects to curriculum for undergraduate courses."

They also urged "collaboration between archival institutions here and abroad," and the "formalization and approval of a curriculum for archival studies."

Organized by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the archives congress on its second year has become a progressive gathering to map out concrete on preserving documentary evidence of the country's history and heritage.

CSA dean Jose Leon Lacson Jr. declared the event as part of its 50th anniversary celebration next year.

Former NCCA commissioner Fr. Harold Buencamino, OSA, the congress' project director, and the congress followed through the three concerns raised during the first: the professional training of record-keepers.

"The congress[aims to develop a roadmap for institutionalizing the education and training in archivists, thus professionalizing the Filipino archivists," Buencamino said during the opening ceremonies. "We are also here to learn from the experiences of established archival institutions offering formal education and training."

PROJECT director Fr. Harold Buencamino, OSA. Right: Honorina Manalo, NAP executive director

CLOCKWISE from bottom, left: Jose Wing, OND director; Virginia Benamerez, CSA-S president Fr. Frederick Comendador, OSA; NCCA commissioner Raymundo Punsalan

China experience

Guest speaker Jose Wing shared the "China experience" in archiving. Coming from his country's big information ecosystem management school, the Renmin University of China, Wing explained there was a demand for professionals who could maintain documents, underscoring that the public and private sectors—companies, universities, associations and government departments, such as the Chinese Ministry of Education—found the services of record-keepers necessary.

"Those who major in archiving always have a high percentage. From 95.4 to 100 percent in 2010 of employment by course of the large demand of the society," Wing said.

Earlier attempt

Jess Bustamante of the School of Library and Information Studies of University of the Philippines told the UP Diliman School of Library and Information Science had been offering courses in archival science since 1994, but a full degree remained problematic.

"[The professors] need to have their specific degree on archival science before one in-stance could confer that degree upon graduation of students," Bustamante said. "In this case, we need to acquire our qualification abroad, in institutions that already have that specialized program."

But she said the Master of Archival Studies Program has already been proposed to the university administration.

Ecclesiastical commitment

Moving focus under the flagship of Spain for three centuries, the Philippines and her heritage have been defined by the influence of the Church. This heritage must be maintained, and NCCA commissioner Punsalan Jose, who delivered the keynote address of the congress.

Also the University of Santo Tomas archivist, Jose explained in his talk, "Training of Ecclesiastical Archivists from Rome to the Southeast Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church," the active role of the Church in preserving historical documents.

"The cultural heritage must be systematically and wisely preserved, in order to make it a part of the lifeblood of the Church's cultural and pastoral service," he said.

Open avenue

Included on the "systematic" and "wise" handling of these archives is the provision to have them "accessible to all," as what Pope John Paul II underlined throughout the seven circular letters of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, Jose added.

Herwina Hizonia, executive director of the National Archives of the Philippines, outlined state initiatives to treat archivists. Aside from the government-mandated ad-powered to them by 1600 he cited several training programs.

Manalo mentioned the Southeast Asian Regional International Council on Archives, the postgraduate northern program on archival studies in University of Hong Kong, and the Special Training in the Japanese Archives in Tokyo.

Lacuña- he said, NAP has been promoting heritage preservation through exhibits, such as the "Conscripted" exhibit in Borneo Isa.

Commission on Higher Education regional director Virginia Benamerez talked about "Requirements for Archival Education Courses."

"Despite the need for a highly defined skills required of archivists, [it has been] reported that the educational requirements of archives personnel here are been specific on what degree should the applicant possess before they apply," the CHED official said.

She urged the congress to present and draft a detailed plan to make that could pave the way for formal archival education.

"A fully developed graduate program in archival studies must establish a curriculum that achieves [specific] goals," Benamerez said.

NCCA exhibit commemorates birth centenary of 4 National Artists

THE NATIONAL Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) will open the exhibit "Kasaysayan," in commemoration with the birth centenary of four National Artists this year—Lucio Lobo (Music), Nestor Manansala (Visual Arts) Hernando Ocampo (Visual Arts) and Carlos Quirino (History) at 10 a.m. at the NCCA Gallery in Intramuros.

"Kasaysayan" features books, photographs and memorabilia of Lobos, Manansala, Ocampo and Quirino. The personal effects here culminate in their artistic productions. Quirino's typewriter, Manansala's easel, Lobo's violin, and Ocampo's books.

Exhibit runs until Jan. 8, 2012. Call 527-2154 to 527-2192 for info.

The NCCA Gallery is at G/F NCCA Building, 633 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila; open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Brenda G. Velarde

15 Cinemalaya bets named

By Marinel R. Cruz

ORGANIZERS of the 8th Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival have announced the finalists for its New Breed and Director's Showcase categories. The festival is set July 20-29, 2012.

The New Breed Full-Length Feature Film Competition has four directors who have not done more than three full-length features) entries: "Ang Kalibasa" by Alby Aldaran; "Ang Nawawala," Mariano "Miano" Jacinto; "Oros," Paul Sta. Ana; "Apparition," Vincent Sandoval and Darlene Malvezzo; "Virus," Julius Sorosoro Ce-sar; "Diablo," Mes de Guzman; "Lolo Igme," Eduardo M. Roy Jr.; "Hilo, 143," Emerson Reyes; "Pergatorio," Loy Arcenas; "Sunta Nina," Emmanuel Q. Palo.

The five finalists in the Director Showcase (for directors who have done at least three commercial feature films) category: "Swakman" by Jun Lana; "Kabayan" ("Wildlife"), Adolfo B. Alix, Jr.; "Kamera Obskura," Raymond Red; "Pwan," Jeffrey Jeturian, and "Mga Munting Liham," Jose Javier Reyes.

Cinemalaya is an annual digital film competition that "seeks to discover, encourage and honor cinematic works of Filipino filmmakers that boldly articulate and freely interpret the Filipino experience with fresh insight and artistic integrity," or passport said in a statement. It is a project of the Cinemalaya Foundation, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Film Development Council of the Philippines and Greenfield Investments.

MART ESCUDERO

Actor

"I WISH that more attention would be given to independent filmmaking this year. I also wish that our industry would be more open,' just like in the United States. Right now, we're still very conservative regarding certain shows. This is very limiting to actors and directors. Sana dumami ang restrictions. Artists should be given more freedom so they can work on improving their films. Personally, I wish na ko able to make more indie movies next year. I hope to join at least one movie in the Cinemalaya Film fest. I also wish that my left shoulder injury would heal quickly. I got it while working out in the gym. It's the only thing that's keeping me from being perfectly fit."

Marinel R. Cruz

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The Perfect Venue

KIDLAT'S "Haranggong Banggoy" defies classification to the day.

Two iconic pioneers of Pinoy indies

By Lito B. Zulueta

Mike de Leon and Kidlat Tahimik are two of six pioneering Filipino independent filmmakers that the Philippine Daily Inquirer is honoring in the third Inquirer Tribute on Thursday, Dec. 15.

Kidlat Tahimik

Kidlat Tahimik (a.k.a. Eric de Guia)—together with the two Lino Brocka and perhaps Bebeto Mendoza—is the most famous Filipino filmmaker abroad. His reputation rests on a small but distinguished body of work, starting with "Mababangong Bangungot" (1977), which—ahead of Brocka's "Jaguar" becoming an entry in the competition section of the Cannes Film Festival in 1980—broke into the competition of the Berlin Film Festival in 1978, where it won the International Film Critics' Prize.

Deceptive primitivism

That film embodies the Kidlat Tahimik aesthetic: a deceptive primitivism that hails both from the crude home film technology utilized by the filmmaker as well as his choice of material—the clash between modernity and tradition in Third World societies. Three decades later, one realizes that "Bangungot" and Kidlat's other movies prefigured the rise of independent cinema amid the ravages of globalization.

In 2008, the Montanez ng Mabuhay Pilipino, the country of respected Filipino film critics, honored its Lifetime Achievement Award for lifetime achievement in filmmaking on Kidlat Tahimik, proclaiming him "the father of Philippine independent cinema."

Kidlat was thrust into global prominence when "Mababangong Bangungot" (International title: "Perfumed Nightmare"), made on a shoestring budget, went to the Berlin Film Festival as a Filipino film was exhibited in an important world festival, played in competition and won big.

The movie was released in the United States in 1980; it was distributed by Zoetrope Studios of Francis Ford Coppola's office, along with Coppola director Philippe Sarreig and other artists, recognized Kidlat as a trailblazer.

"Bangungot" defies classification: a comic semi-documentary that is both fiction and nonfiction, fantasy and real, autobiography and social history. Himself playing the protagonist in the movie, Kidlat tells the parable of a Filipino everyman enamored with all things American. From songs of World War II American army jeeps, he puts together the journey symbol of both Pinoy ingenuity and colonialism to the American dream, "profound sight more" of the Filipino's diurnal life.

The film was ahead of its time. It was a funny but cautionary tale on the tropes of globalization, back when the phenomenon was still to be detected and named. It was an ecological fable, social satire, postcolonial parable, and hallmark of guerrilla filmmaking—the film was all of this, all at the same time, and more.

With unassuming artistry with "pure thunder" (English for his nom de plume), Kidlat Tahimik would hammer his chosen geglobalization more powerfully in his next movies—"Turumba" (1983) and "Why is Yellow Mellow, Ricardo?" (1990). He flies in on the wavelengths of fantasy, perhaps the first Malay to circumnavigate the globe, remains unfinished, in its length and mass, disobedient, it seems to have prepared Lav Diaz's 10-hour movies.

Born on Dec. 3, 1942, in Baguio City, Eric de Guia was the son of the first woman mayor in the Philippines. He went to the University of the Philippines, where he became president of the student council. He married Filipina but his MBA and worked for a time at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris.

He returned home for an executive career in government or multilateral institutions abroad until he discovered filmmaking. Some have speculated that, had Diosdado Macapagal not re-elected over to be reelected, he would have become president of the Philippines. For some inconceivable reason, Dr. Guia shocked the vast and set of synchronicity for the children of the arts and filmmakers. Advocating the return to native roots, Kidlat often wears the Bagan Lumang in key gatherings and carries around a wooden replica of the camera that symbolizes his vision to reveal life with an authentic Filipino point of view, shorn of western pretension or western Orientalism.

In 2004, Kidlat lost his four-story ancestral house in Baguio City in a fire and, along with it, film stocks and a collection of cast and artifacts. But he continues to shoot films and threatens to exhibit up a new movie soon—like his "Bangungot" character, who recycles US aerial scraps into his puppets.

A member of the Ifugao Baguio arts community, Kidlat nevertheless seems content on playing second fiddle to his artist-sons, Kamayan and Kidlat Amiel, who have won prizes here and abroad for their works. He refers to himself as "the father of Kamayan de Guia and Kidlat Tahimik jr."

But Kidlat continues to be a revered name in world cinema. When "Bangungot" was shown in the San Francisco Cinematheque in 2007, a little over three 30 years later, Kidlat Tahimik's "Perfumed Nightmare" remains as relevantly chaotic."

Path-breaking struggles

Top American filmmaker on the auteur level and film history professor Fredric Jameson was serious papers analyzing Kidlat's movies. Recently, a Filipino religious priest, Fr. Antonio Silva, successfully defended his dissertation at the Catholic University of Nijmegen, "Political Defiance in Third Cinema: The Filmmaking of Edward Schillebeeckx and the Films of Kidlat Tahimik." The book has been published by Lexor Britain.

In the Philippines, Kidlat remains the paragon of independent filmmaking. Because of his path-breaking struggles, the way has been cleared for independent cinema to flourish.

Mike de Leon

Mike de Leon made his last film, "Sisyaling Third World," more than 10 years ago (in 2000) and there's no indication that he'll make a new one soon. For all he knows, he may not be making another movie. For the next 20 years, that, for his admirers, De Leon's legacy is secure, distinguished by such solid masterpieces as "Batch '81" (1982), "Kisapmata" (1981) and "Itanong Mo Kay Rosa" (1984).

In some respects, De Leon resembles Kidlat in his refusal and the ill-fortunes mainstream cinema and independent cinema. Some of the films that crossed Iliff Studios, De Leon struck an independent path by forming Cinema Artists in the 1970s. The studio produced films such "Manila: In the Claws of Neon" (1975) and De Leon's directorial debut, "Sister" (1976). These are now considered high points of the second golden age of Philippine cinema.

For all of his maverick qualities, De Leon's career shows recapacity for his seniors. If he wasn't making his own films, he would be aiding other important filmmakers in making theirs. Aside from being Brocka's cinematographer, he also was director Eddie Romero's "Aguila."

Also characteristic of his career is his taking on a kind genre and reinventing it—a rare sign of the indie spirit.

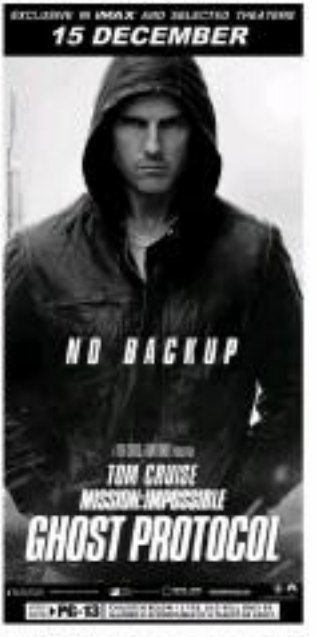
"Hot" adapted the features of the horror genre to habitat a technically well-crafted movie that capitalized on the tropical public fixation of the wasteland Filipino cartoons (Only Nicki to come up with a tone de force musical hit, like on the horrors of abortion.

"Kakabakaba Ka Ba?" is a comedy of errors that is also a political satire against drug trafficking and Japanese imperialism in the 1970s and, as it turns out, even a caveat against rising Chinese global economic dominance. In "Kakabakaba," De Leon reinvented genres and, in the penultimate sequence, paid tribute to classic 1970 musicals in an outrageous climax with a singing pseudo-samurai duel, Bruce Lee, Ian Gleason notwithstanding, drag queen-ers disguised as nuns, and the heroes and heroines caught in the middle.

Provocative, reflexive

Anticipating the postmodern sense of indie cinema, De Leon made "Sisyaling Third World" at the closing of the second millennium, around the time when the Philippines was marking the centennial of its independence. What was to be a tribute to fiscal and Philippine nationhood became a highly provocative and reflexive take on the national hero as well as the struggle for a national identity. Looking back, the movie, with the political questions it raises, its defiant use of black and white, and even such its concerns, is one of the legacy of Rizal, served as a precursor to the third golden age of Philippine cinema that is now elevating.

Mike de Leon made his last film, "Sisyaling Third World," more than 10 years ago (in 2000) and there's no indication that he'll make a new one soon. But his legacy is secured by solid masterpieces



Chipmunks to meet fans in mall events

MISS Piggy in Bells Series

THE CHIPMUNKS and the Chipettes are back with an all-new adventure that takes them back to the forest in "Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked."

Having gone domesticated, famous, pampered and civilized, the Chipmunks are relearning the ways of the wild as Dave Seville (Jason Lee) goes on a quest to find them.

Twentieth Century Fox joins the holiday excitement in malls with the chipmunks characters —Alvin, Theodore and Simon. Currently doing the rounds in SM malls, the mascots will next be seen in SM Bacoor (Dec. 14), SM Southmall (Dec. 15), SM Calamba and SM San Pablo (Dec. 16), SM Dasmariñas and SM Molino (Dec. 17), SM Manila (Dec. 18), SM Bicutan and SM Sta. Rosa (Dec. 19), SM Taytay (Dec. 20), SM Fairview (Dec. 21), SM Marikina (Dec. 22), SM Batangas and SM Lipa (Dec. 23).

The latest Alvin Elite brings more adventure, music and mayhem as Alvin and the troupe run amok in a luxury cruise liner that brings them to a deserted island where they survive on their own instincts and tricks.

Distributed by Warner Bros., "Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked" opens nationwide on Jan. 8.

MERIDA of Scotland

'Brave' adventure

The new trailer for Disney/Pixar's coming Scotland-set animated feature "Brave" has just been revealed by the studio and can be accessed through www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOpHMmtpwWs&feature=channel_video_title.

Since ancient times, stories of epic battles and mystical legends have been passed through the generations across the rugged and tempestuous Highlands of Scotland. In "Brave," a new tale joins the lore when the courageous Merida (voice of Kelly Macdonald) confronts tradition, destiny and the forces of beauty.

Merida is a skilled archer and impetuous daughter of King Fergus (voice of Billy Connolly) and Queen Elinor (voice of Emma Thompson). Determined to carve her own path in life, Merida defies an age-old custom seated in the capricious lords of the land: massive Lord MacGuffin, surly Lord MacIntosh (voice of Craig Ferguson) and cantankerous Lord Dingwall (voice of Robbie Coltrane).

Merida's actions inadvertently unleash chaos and fury in the kingdom, and when she turns to an eccentric old Witch (voice of Julie Walters) for help, she is granted an ill-fated wish. The ensuing peril leaves Merida to discover the meaning of true bravery in order to undo a beastly curse before it's too late.

"Brave" is a grand adventure full of heart, memorable characters and humor for all ages. It opens in August 2011, and will be presented in Disney Digital 3D in select theaters.

ALVIN (here with a Chipette) and the troupe is at SM Bicutan on Dec. 14-23.

'Twilight' mode

Disney has just released new character posters of the family comedy "The Muppets," taking a visual cue from "Twilight."

The hilarious images show Miss Piggy, her suitor Kermit the Frog and Fozzie as Bella (Kristen Stewart), Edward (Robert Pattinson), respectively.

In "The Muppets," the world's biggest Muppet fan, Walter, his brother Gary (Jason Segel) and Gary's girlfriend Mary (Amy Adams) from Smalltown, discover the robust plan of villain Tex Richman (Chris Cooper) to raise the Muppet Theater and drill for the oil secretly discovered beneath the Muppets' former stomping grounds. To stage a telethon and raise the $10 million needed to save the theater, Walter, Mary and Gary help Kermit reunite the Muppets, who have all gone their separate ways. Fozzie now performs with a three-piece tribute band called the Moopets, Miss Piggy is a plus-size fashion editor at Vogue Paris, Animal is in a Santa Barbara clinic for anger management and Gonzo is a high-powered plumbing magnate.

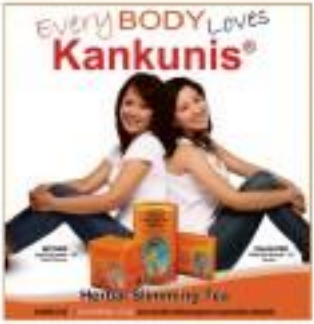
Opening in theaters in February 2012, "The Muppets" is distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures International through Columbia Pictures.

ENTERTAINMENT

Edited by Dennis G. Velarde

Joj Alonso
Film producer TV host-lawyer
"I WISH the entertainment industry would produce more blockbusters and award-winning films and finish riddles & co like Cobbler Clubs and Oscars. As for me, I can only hope for more years in my life. It's been three years since I survived the dreaded cancer. I hope that milestones would last for some time so I can be with my children longer, become a better lawyer and make more films." Marivel B. Cruz

Nikki Valdez
Actress
"I WISH for the entertainment industry to flourish more, for it to produce bigger projects and for those projects to earn or we could all benefit from more income. For myself, I wish to continue having projects so I could give my daughter and family a good life. I also wish for good health and peace for all."
Marivel B. Cruz



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Another feather in his precious cap

"SPEAKERS speak. Writers like me only write."

With these words, Inquirer's Boston U. Yuzo accepted the special Asiak TV Broadcasters' Award for his "significant contribution in espousing the agenda of child-sensitive, quality television programming," at the annual Asiak TV Awards held Dec. 4 in Quezon City.

Yuzo is the editor of Inquirer's Interactive Special and writes the column "Viewfinder" for the Entertainment section.

The muted stage director and TV critic, who was elevated to the Catholic Mass Media Awards Hall of Fame last year after winning his third Best Entertainment Columnist award, follows Gina Lopez, Fernando Poe Jr., Stephen Rondinlo and Estanislao Antonio, who received the same honor in previous years.

The event was staged for the 11th consecutive year, honoring the country's most vital creative TV programs and personalities. The winners were determined by thousands of jurors after a year-long assessment that brought the Asiak TV routine to various parts of the country.

Noise barrage

The route to attendance gained a point for the Asiak TV viewers and the guests in holding a noise barrage using bamboo cannons, especially crafted for the occasion. Child stars Maliksi Morales and Moira Louise Rey led the celebration before they solidified literally her on local television.

The Asiak TV award is bestowed by parents, teachers, NGOs and other sectors of society on television programs which, based on their evaluations, are wholesome and child-safe.

A total of 113 programs were declared family-friendly after nine months of solitude and thorough evaluation and 46 screening sessions nationwide. Rey President Ajuner Nisay, the parent of honor, was represented by his daughter, Mahari Rep. Abigail Bilay-Campos.

ABS-CBN captured end region of stations took home 24 nods. GMA News TV and GMA Network received 22 nods while Net 25 got 21. IBNTV earned 20 while TV5 received 9. The rest of the remaining nods were shared by Zoe TV, Studio 23, PTV and IBC.

MIKE Enriquez and Mel Tiangco (second and fourth from left) join Asiak TV's Hakdalan Hall of Fame. With them are (from left) foundation chair Edgardo Roces, former President Joseph Estrada, actress Susan Roces and foundation president Bob del Rosario.

Inquirer editor and columnist Nestor U. Yuzo is this year's recipient of the Asiak TV Broadcasters' Award.

Six winners were declared this year for ISPS, SUN and SRS.

Former President Joseph Estrada and Mr Susan Roces, both pillars of the entertainment industry, presented the Hakdalan Hall of Fame awards to the personalities who have consistently topped the annual surveys for the past seven straight years.—GINA Kimerald's Mike Enriquez and Mel Tiangco and ABS-CBN's Julius Babao, Korina Sanchez and Kuya Kabayan.

Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, official spokesperson of Asiak TV, hosted the awards show.

'Worth emulating'

Another highlight of the affair was the presentation of the Asiak of Bote Ako Ye survey winners. The most "credible, wholesome and worth emulating by the youth," as identified by the jury, were male and female TV personalities tied by top winners Mel Tiglao and Jessica Soho, both news and public affairs anchors.

The other honorees were Bjoni Agoncillo, Gerald Anderson, Kim Atienza, Arnold Clavio, John Lloyd Cruz, Shalala Cuelco, Lito Monteras, Gory Morris, Doc Willie Ong, Vic Sotto, Rhian Ramos, Anne Curtis, Karen Davila, Isaiah Fernandez, Toni Gonzaga, Angel Locsin, Vicky Morales, Claire Ramos, Judy Ann Santos and Bernadette Sembrano.

Asiak TV is mainly chaired by Bocon, president Bob del Rosario and secretary general Blog Gran Fluid. The foundation is at the forefront of a massive media literacy campaign that goes to the grassroots of the country.

Awarded the Asiak TV host for the year are:

ABS-CBN: "Dyan, the Explorer," "Bahay Mganyan," "I Got It," "Jimmy Henson," "Junior Masterchef," "Kabuhayang Sisak na Sisak," "Maraglaway," "Stand

MAHARATA, nee Gary Valenciano and Julia Barbo

A," "Salamat Dok," "Spongebob Squarepants," "Tumapanayam" and "Why Not?"

ABS-CBN (Regional): "Arangkada, Antoche! (Iloilo), "Hahal na Kapamilya," "Kapamilya Winner Ka Dyan," "Maayong Buntag Kapamilya...Cebu," "Maayong Buntag Mindanao," "Mapadayag Umaga S.C. Mindanao," "MagTV Sine Aminin, MagTV Sa! Ain 'Ta!" (Bagiuo), "MagTV Sa! Ato Ni!" (CDO), "MagTV Sa! Celso" and "MagTV Sa! Subya Ka!"

PTV: "Ang Tao's Kalikasan," "Beautiful Batangas," "Bisyo Brown," "Gma ng Himala," "Power to Unite," "Sipag and Wasakan," "Teleduyan Sports" and "Tito Ang Martino"

TV5: "Bagong Kapatid," "Bantoc," "Chuuppinan," "Family Money," "Hiddin Islamidan," "Special Agent One," "Tita Mimi," "Tito Pioner To Be A Millionaire" and "Tv Lubin Gubin"

GMA Network: "Abel," "Bet Ang," "Umagbuhay," "Kapi-Atang Buntag," "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho," "Kapuso Mukaban," "Pinoy Mo," "Rakadalanding," "Sepang Rachi" and "Wish Ko Lang."

GMA News TV: "Ang Pinakaa," "Bawal ang Duwag kay Marsing Winner," "Brigada," "Day Off," "Front Row," "Full Time Mom," "Good Boss," "Lifestyle," "Showcase on Hand—Special," "On Call, Phone—Special," "Pep Talk and Text Time"

IBC: "Artista Boo," "Byahing Laugh" and "IBCtv."

Radio DZ: "Byahing Radio" Net 25: "Ang Iglesia ni Cristo," "Ang Pagbabagong," "Ang Tunay Dam," "Discovery Geohazzy," "Footprints," "Global 3000," "Hamtayan," "Iglesia ni Cristo & the Bible," "In Focus," "In Good Hope," "Landmarks," "Light of Salvation," "Mosaica," "Omars," "Pamanatalatan, Ang ani at Ang ding," "Strange Ang Tang ng JBC," "Red Carpet," "Spoon," "The Messages," "Tomorrow Today" and "Tribe"

UNTV: "Bong Mamin," "Bread 'n' Butter," "Candidly Speaking with Willy," "Climate Change," "DYRman," "One on TV," "Rare Lang Yan," "Ta-xonghero," "Secura," "Ssaggaay," "Ekdamin Simin," "SSC Show," "Law Profile," "Make my Day," "Mambela," "Mapatay ang Pamahon," "Matuto ng Pagpag," "Pol Watch," "Rosary in Action" and "Sports 360"

Zoe TV: "Calvary on Aksyon"

Unang Hirit Limbawayan, chief of the Movie and Television Review and Classification board, presented citations for the top 10 favorite programs of Filipino households as polled by Asiak TV. They are "TV Patrol World," "100 Days to Heaven," "Eat Bulaga," "Showtime," "24 Oras," "Kimya," "Bubble," "Maalaala Mo Kaya," "Strangelserie" and "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho."

Asiak TV will begin its grassroots consultations and screening sessions for the 2012 season in late January.

SHARLET Lanu with composer and musical director Mel Villena.

Indiebill president Sandy Prieto Romualdez and Libre editor Chino de la Vega

ISAY Abrenio and Robert Seña-Ilick

JED Madela brings the house down with his powerful vocals.

Inquirer Lhot Maria R. Pinoy

Stars serenade Inquirer service awardees

MUSIC gave life to the business Employees Service Awards held Dec. 7 at the Marriott Hotel in Pasay City.

The Service Award recipients were serenaded by the Anonymous Mindbreg Pilipino (MBP) Band, composed of some of the country's top session musicians led by Mel Villena, and featuring singer Sharlet. The group performed jazzy versions of Tin Pan Alley standards and Christmas music, as well as soul and pop classics.

The husband-and-wife team of Robert Seña and Isay Abrenio, both highly regarded musical theater talents have said on Broadway and the West End, each time to join the AMP Band for a few numbers.

Jed Madela floored everyone with his patented soaring vocals on "This is the Moment" and "Kissed By Me."

Presidentia Pati took the finale number on a high note as her welcome dance/soloing in her Lady Gaga act.

MEL Villena, on the saxophone, jazzes it up with his Anonymous Mindbreg Pilipino or AMP Big Band, composed of top session musicians.

FRENCHIESKA Fairy does a Lady Gaga.

MARTIN Nievera

RICKY Davao

RICHARD Gomez

Celebs who . . .

Previous page

hope Santa will be nice enough to replace that fan Maricris recently gifted!"

Dolores Meneses: "Both naughty and nice. Naughty that's why Santa may want to ban some me for the right and nice who still respect me and give me bountiful luck. Here, Innocent. I shared blessings with the less fortunate."

Lloyd Caparaso: "I think I've been naughty. I spent too much time at work and too little time with my mom and the people I love."

Timely toast

Stars overflowed at the recent launch of Sassy Manila's VSOP Bed Holiday Bottle. It was supposedly serendipitous that the event(s) held Red Ball, an annual fundraiser for the benefit of the Philippine Red Cross and spearheaded by Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Kaye Tinga, happened to be the event where Sassy Manila officially launched the VSOP Red Holiday Bottle. A timely toast to the coming holidays we say.

Seen at the Red Ball were Ruffa Gutierrez, Lit Ty, Raymund Gutierrez, Phoemela Baraquia, Ricky Davao, Raja Lacuna, Jose Sabarre and Richard and Lucy Gomez among others. 'Tis the season to be merry and regal!

E-mail: sassymgt@sassymanila.yahoo.com.

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

NEWPORT CINEMAS

1 ARTHUR CHRISTMAS in 3D
2 IMMORTALS
3 NEW YEAR'S EVE

POWER PLANT CINEMA

WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU / IMMORTALS - GIP/911
NEW YEAR'S EVE - PG13
IMMORTALS - R18
NEW YEAR'S EVE - PG13
THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN (3D) - PG13
ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (in 3D) - SP

AYALA MALLS CINEMAS

MOVIE TIME

GLORIETTA 4
1: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
2: IMMORTALS
3: NEW YEAR'S EVE
4: CITY ON FIRE
5: HAPPY FEET 2/BREAKING DAWN PART 1
6: WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
7: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN

GREENBELT 1
1: WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
2: NEW YEAR'S EVE

GREENBELT 3
1: IMMORTALS
2: NEW YEAR'S EVE
3: BREAKING DAWN PART 1
4: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
5: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1: NEW YEAR'S EVE
2: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
3: IMMORTALS
4: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN
5: WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU

AYALA CENTER CEBU
1: IMMORTALS
2: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
3: NEW YEAR'S EVE
4: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN/WON'T LAST A DAY

MARQUEE
1: IMMORTALS
2: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
3: NEW YEAR'S EVE
4: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN/WON'T LAST A DAY

MARKET! MARKET!
1: WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
2: HAPPY FEET 2 (3D)
3: NEW YEAR'S EVE
4: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
5: IMMORTALS
6: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN
7: BREAKING DAWN PART 1

TRINOMA
1: IMMORTALS
2: CITY ON FIRE
3: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN (3D)
4: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
5: HAPPY FEET 2/BREAKING DAWN PART 1
6: WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
7: NEW YEAR'S EVE

ABREEZA
1: ARTHUR CHRISTMAS (3D)
2: IMMORTALS
3: THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN
4: WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU

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Old movie love teams never die

VIEWFINDER
Nestor U. Torre

GLC told me so soon after the early audience reaction to the pilot episode of "Temptation Island" that the show's ratings were going to be very good. And they were right.

Now, I'm told, the network is already working on a second season of the reality show, which will feature a new set of contestants.

Speaking of GLC, I'm told that the network is also working on a second season of "Survivor Philippines," which will also feature a new set of contestants.

Editor Bonnie D. Valarde

ENTERTAINMENT Living Stars

Get free* drinks at Seattle's Best Coffee

Standard Chartered

Here for good

Christmas is a love fest for Lexi, mom Homebody /H2

Celebrities say thanks

WHAT are the stars thankful for as another year closes?

SHARON CUNETA

"My son Miguel's adoption became official on Dec. 7! Also, my beautiful family and home life. KC's new beginnings, renewed excitement about my work, the return of my inner-like focus and discipline, great opportunities, and the real... kudos that I will always have much to give and that God will has a lot of plans for me." (Partially photo on page /MG)

John Arcilla

JOHN ARCILLA

"I am thankful that, no matter what others say, the head of this country is not corrupt and that his trust rating is intact. I am also very thankful that the younger generation has witnessed that to their... Two of our top leaders and their colleagues were not spared by the law for corruption and wrong

CELEBRITIES /H6

JON SANTOS

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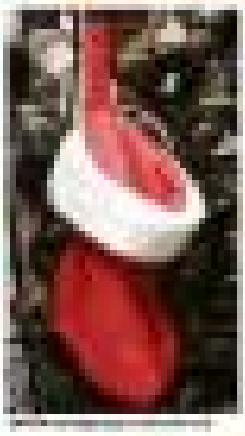
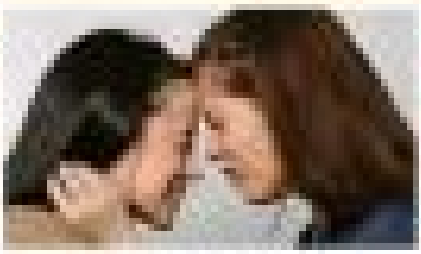
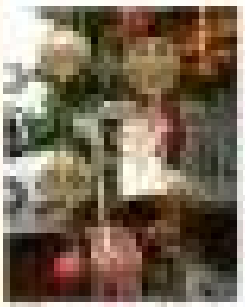
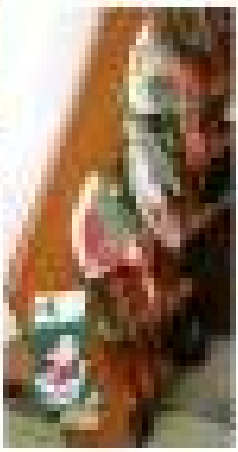




Colorful holidays with Lexi and

'Knack' is the word for mom and daughter when decorating for Christmas





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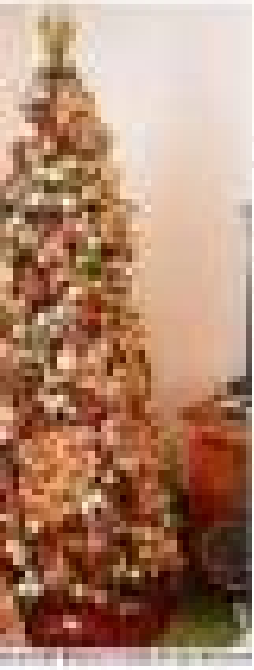

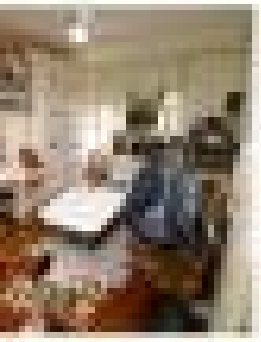

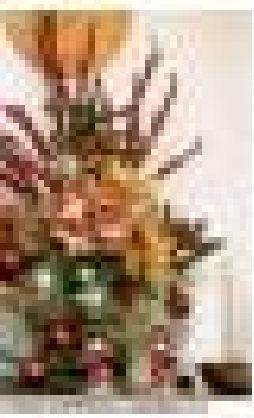

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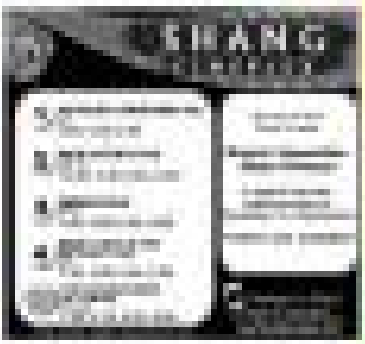
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HOLIDAY CHEERS

MEGA FAMILY Sharon Cuneta (R) with (clockwise from top) her husband, Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, daughters Miel, KC and Frankie and son Miguel.

Celebrities say thanks...

From page B1

JOSE Javier Reyes

doing. This part of our history will be the youth's greatest teacher, and hopefully it produces even better leaders.

JOSE JAVIER REYES:

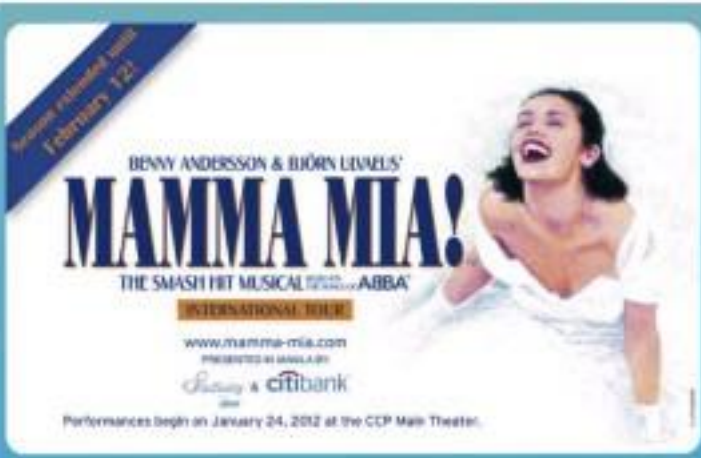
"It has been a most challenging year with a lot of learnings. But I am most grateful for my good health and the strength that God has given me to learn from setbacks in order to move on to the next level of my journey. I am grateful to have my closest and true friends beside me through whatever weather."

YAM LABANAS:

"I am thankful for surviving the year and learning new things that allow me to keep up with fast-changing technology and upgrade my craft."

JON SANTOS:

"I am ecstatic that Pinoy comedy is alive and well... at the Smart Araneta Coliseum, in the lounges and bars, on TV, on the silver screen, and maybe even at the Oscars." Interviews by Jhayard Gen Diego Jr.



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EVERY bedroom door is decorated with an Advent wreath.

Colorful holidays...

From page B1

"Barbie has been my guardian since I was small," says Loni. "Our favorite hangout is the kitchen." The house is just right for them, she says. "Not too big. Not too small. We still get to see each other though we're always on the go."

Sprucing up

Yet another anticipated family activity is sprucing up the house for the holidays. All the decorative items are recycled, Maricel says. "Our goal is to make the Christmas tree decor as budget (friendly) and greedy as possible," Loni jests.

"If you notice, there's not just one color," Maricel points out. It's an explosion of colors, Loni agrees.

"The more colorful, the merrier," Maricel says. "I hate themeside all-white or all-red trees. Our tree has red, green, silver, yellow, gold ornaments—of all shapes and sizes."

Maricel proudly recalls that the transparent (for kaleidoscopic purr) all the way from San Fernando, Pampanga, 18 years ago.

She remembers the ornaments through the years, too. "I frequented village bazaars and flea markets in Greenhills. They've lasted long because I always store them properly after the holidays."

Some of the trinkets on the tree were home-made, Maricel reveals. "I bought Styrofoam balls and, with a glue gun, covered them with satin ribbons."

Bargain-hunting

She says another holiday tradition is bargain-hunting in Divisoria and Greenhills. "Loni is a smart shopper. She got smudge shoes for only P400 at the Mall in Divisoria," proud mama says. "She can pick the right gift for every person. She puts a lot of thought into each present."

Maricel makes sure to follow the same traditions every year. "Mass, then noche buena. In the morning, we open gifts and have lunch at my mom's place."

Another lifestyle convention she has bestowed on her kids is the Advent calendar. "I used to order it from abroad ya, but now it's available in (the deli) Santi's. It's like a Christmas countdown. Every day, Loni opens a window on the calendar and he gets a chocolate. It teaches him patience."

One family ritual, not just at Christmastime but all year round...is snuggling together in mom's huge bed. "Liam and Loni each have their own rooms, but they prefer to sleep in my bed," Maricel gasps in mock exasperation.

Actually, she doesn't mind, Loni says. "It's actually practical because we have to turn on only one air-conditioner instead of three."

E-mail the author : bayanisen@gmail.com

NO LEARNING

We're taking a holiday break. There will be no eLearning section on Dec. 19, Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. But our inbox will stay open. E-mail all requests for coverage, student submissions and press releases to learning@inquirer.com.ph. Happy holidays!

LEARNING

Edited by Chelo Bunuel-Formoso

Email: learning@inquirer.com.ph

CTH president Tomio Lizarraga Cantabrana (left) with Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines Christopher Thornley, Qiana Donaldson, CTC Vancouver campus president, and Ken Berardi, CTC Surrey campus president, the school's state-of-the-art computer facility

SCHOOL BUS

ANDREW TAN, DOCTOR OF HUMANITIES

The University of the East (UE) has conferred the degree of Doctor of Humanities, honoris causa, on one of its most distinguished alumni, businessman Andrew L. Tan (third from left). The conferment coincided with the June 12th Midyear Commencement Rites for UE Manila and UE Caloocan graduates. Tan, chair and president of property developer Megaworld Corp., is the eighth recipient of UE's Doctor of Humanities and the 28th to be conferred an honorary degree. With Tan, are (from left) UE president and chief academic officer Rene Escoto, UE vice-chair Jaime Bautista, executive director Julito Vitriolo of the Commission on Higher Education, and Katherine Tan, wife of the honoree.

TRAINING *a five-star cast for* TOURISM

By Chelo Bunuel-Formoso

WHY STUDY for four years? This is a question the folks behind the Canadian Tourism and Hospitality Institute (CTHI) like to ask.

They are referring to students who spend four years in college, only to end up jobless. The CTHI counteroffer is job-oriented training for two years or less.

Tomio Lizarraga, CTHI president, admits there are already too many tourism schools in the country. "But there's little practical professional training," he says. "Despite their four-year degrees, our graduates do not meet the operational needs of resorts, hotels, restaurants, even cruise ships in the travel and tourism industry."

At 42, Lizarraga earned his attention to tourism education. Well, maybe that's not quite accurate. His heart seems to be entrenched in franchising (all because, one, CTHI holds schooling rights in the Canadian Tourism College (CTC). Tomio-to-be said, two, he plans to broaden CTHI all over the Philippines, particularly in places that are not tourist destinations, such as Boracay and Cebu. So there you go—franchising again.

"I'm an advocate at heart," he says. For years, he pushed and he pushed and he pushed until small and medium entrepreneurs heeded his advice to franchise out their businesses. His efforts earned him the title "Father of Philippine Franchising."

Then he added tourism to his list of advocacies. Wherever and whenever he had a chance, he would talk to CEOs about investing in the travel and tourism industry. Airlines, for example. Today, he teams with prominent businessman Lucio Gotiong (Inquirer Group Outpost for possible future employment).

Lizarraga's franchising template that originally consisted of the five elements of the tourism supply chain—airlines, resorts, accommodations, attractions and activities—has now included two more: advertising and academic linkage.

"We need to have these things in place before we can even think of increasing the number of tourist arrivals," he says. "We don't just need five-star hotels. We need five-star workers. We want qualified people working in airlines, cruise ships, hotels, restaurants, resorts—all those places that are meant for tourists."

He acknowledges that Filipinos are already good-natured and hospitable and, with this training in the form of expert training, they can be leading players in the global tourism market as executives.

To put emphasis on "qualified," Lizarraga has got a group of friends together to form the CTHI. On top of that, he worked his talk off trying to ensure the CTC Vancouver franchise became, he says, he looked to the travel masters and found the Canadians to lend

TRAINING 4

THE CTHI reception desk (above); restaurant dining setup (left)

Don Bosco graduates to train with Korean firm

GRADUATES of the Don Bosco Technical College (DBTC) will undergo a three-month training with Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp. Deployed for possible future employment.

The electronics firm said DBTC crowned seventy their long-term partnership that will ensure a pool of trained manpower that can provide Samsung the competent workers it will need.

Twenty graduating students of the DBTC Mandaluyong TVET

PHILIP Torres, DBTC project manager, and Al Cagunan, TVET technical director

FR. MARTIN Mezzari, SDB, DBTC president, Supoi's Cornelio Gangan Jr., Jongsoo Hwang and KC Park mark a trainee at work.

progress have been named as the first beneficiaries of the joint undertaking.

They will be sent to Samsung's accredited service centers where they will train for three months.

The partnership is in line with the two organizations' corporate social responsibility initiatives started in 2000 when they launched a technology project that empowered the youth.

Supoi president KC Park said Samsung continued to build on its belief in the power of technology to

DONATIONS 4

KUMON BAGS TWO BEST FRANCHISE AWARDS THIS YEAR

These awards clearly honor the vision of Kumon Philippines, Inc., ever since the franchise first landed on the Philippine soil: "To nurture self-learning ability in every child for a successful life that will effect positive change in the Philippine society."

In the Philippines alone, there are over 45,000 students whose potentials are being maximized in 225 centers.

Kumon in your community

It actually takes more than legal papers and capital to acquire the license to franchise and operate a Kumon center. To own a Kumon center requires time and commitment to nurture and motivate children and all kinds of learners. More than learning the business know-how, Kumon franchisees should have a genuine love and concern for children and the community. Inspiring and empowering children and families are the key roles that Kumon franchisees play. Thus, more than running a business, Kumon franchisees operate the centers as education.

"Every child is an achiever" is the ideology that has inspired the Kumon Method of Learning and the Kumon franchisees who give each child an opportunity and the right environment where they can continue to maximize their potential. With subjects that are fundamental in all other areas of learning, students develop their skills in math and reading, helping them to conquer their fear of math and develop advanced reading comprehension skills and an innate love for reading. More than these, Kumon aims for students develop the confidence and independence to learn, allowing them to experience self-learning that it becomes natural to them.

To know how you can bring Kumon to your community, call (02) 883-1224 or visit http://ph.kumonglobal.com.

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KUMON

DepEd: Keep Christmas simple, meaningful

DAVAO CITY – Secretary Armin Luistro discouraged schools from holding lavish and compulsory holiday celebrations as he announced that the Christmas break in public schools would be Dec. 21 to Jan. 3.

The break was meant to give students and teachers time to observe the holiday season, the Department of Education (DepEd) said.

Inculcating schools to avoid lavish celebrations, Luistro said Christmas parties should be simple and meaningful. If there was going to be any form of contributions, he said, it should be voluntary.

The secretary said schools could hold their Christmas parties on Dec. 19 or 20 before the long holiday break.

Luistro added that teachers and school officials should strictly follow the guidelines in DepEd Order No. 13, series of 2009, on the holding of simple Christmas celebrations.

The former De La Salle University president pointed out that Jesus Christ led a simple life so we can do so too.

He warned that school officials would be held liable if the department received complaints that they did not follow the guidelines.

Erring school officials could face administrative sanctions if proven guilty of misbehaviors.

STUDENTS of Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School display their new laptops. Also in photo are (from left) Chin Mirit, head of Smart's wireless marketing; Tessa Soriano, XOO resource person for refunding; and PBS's Jenito Santos, assistant brand manager; Chad Estrada, country marketing manager; and Clint Morales, external relations leader.

e.Studyante aims to give laptops to 1M students

THE E-STUDYANTE program, or e-learning advocacy of PBS Philippines and Smart Communications Inc. and Synergise Foundation, was launched recently at Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School (MLQES).

The program will provide beneficiary schools/children with laptops from Elo One Laptop per Child (OLPC) Association. Smart provides access to the Internet.

It is expected that the program will help open opportunities for learning on student beneficiaries can be more competitive.

With the technology and connectivity provided by e-Studyante, students are provided tools for finishing their basic education requirements.

They also gain access to the latest ideas and information to be competitive in an increasingly technology-driven and connected world.

Chad Estrada, PBS country marketing manager, said the child-friendly laptops were designed for developing countries to help empower the world's poorest children through education.

The laptops, he said, were very durable and energy-efficient. They even also preloaded with learning software.

Estrada said the laptops were meant to complement traditional learning methods and tools.

Beneficiary MLQES students were greeted with video messages from celebrity supporters of the e-Studyante program, as well as an e-mail from President Aquino, when they turned over their laptops for the first time.

Guided by PBS employee volunteers, the students experienced the thrill of sending their very first e-mail by replying to the President's message.

With e-Studyante, the PBS, which has just celebrated its 70th year, took its commitment to children's education to the next level. It hopes to have given away 1 million laptops by the time it celebrates its centennial.

Slowly, staying the company could not reach its goal without help, asked members and other Filipinos to support e-Studyante by buying PBS promo packs and spreading the word about the program to family and friends.

Specially marked PBS promo packs will not only give consumers a 40-percent discount on their favorite products but also help Filipino schoolchildren get their own laptops and Internet access.

Participating PBS brands include Safeguard, Tide, Pampers, Downy, Ariel, Panteen, Head & Shoulders, Joy, Rejoice, Whisper, Olay, Gillette, Vicks and Ambi Pur.

Bowie said, to be next five months, the company expected to distribute 400 laptops to five schools nationwide.

Ramon Isberto, head of Smart's public affairs group, said the telecommunications company had always been supportive of programs that attractive improve the quality of education through information and communication technology.

He said they hoped Internet connectivity would make learning easier and information accessible to more children.

To find out more about the e-Studyante program, visit its Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/e-Studyante#!/

Filipino ingenuity results in low-cost technologies

THE FILIPINO talent for innovation was highlighted recently at the Biomedium Center, United Laboratories Inc. in Mandaluyong City, where start-up companies were honored at the Annual Filipinnovation Award.

The winners, who got cash prizes and gift packs, produced creative and economical technologies that would benefit the agriculture, industry and ordinary Pinoys here and abroad.

Abel Lubaterio has produced nontoxic pesticides for flowering and other ornamental plants. The products, which primarily control fungus and bacteria, are inexpensive and environment-friendly. They can be sprayed directly on plants, or used for dipping after harvest.

Bathilda Dehumidifier Mechanical Dryer makes dryers for bakers and cooperatives. Their installation can dry rice and corn in any weather with high quality results and at low cost.

Biofuelin Technologies makes solar-powered road markers that recharge in the day and light up automatically at night. The rechargeable batteries last three to five years. The markers can save lives, especially during calamities.

Cytodiagn Genevie Procter Gamble makes cord-cutting devices that can substitute for wooden door jambs. Products are as smooth as wood and do not warp in low weather. More importantly, they are termite-, fire- and water-proof.

Filmagnosco, formerly Mayad Film Ltd., makes realistic three-dimensional models that can be accessed through the Web. Real estate developers can use the technology to show homes and other projects to potential customers abroad, like overseas workers.

The Filipinnovation Award was also sponsored by Petron Corp. and the Department of Science and Technology's Technology Application and Promotion Institute, Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development, and Regional Office-National Capital Region.

Davao inventions

Creativity down south was evident at the Regional Invention Contest and Exhibit held at the NCCC Mall in Davao City.

Manolo Tampanang built the Compressed Air Thermal Fuel Oil Dryer that converts used cooking oil into biofuel for engines. He won the 24ka award for Outstanding Utility Model Cheap and efficient. The dryer can be mass-produced locally and, best of all, it can solve the problem of how to dispose of used oil properly so it does not clog waterways.

Mary Jane Babaola has created the System Saves Scoliosis Lotion Pyjamits to Remember (that sees the lifted Award for Outstanding Creative Research. Babaola says apparently, which are delicious snacks, are a rich source of vitamins, making them ideal as nutrients.

"Aloe process cells, heals wounds and prevents skin inflammation," Babaola says. Nine volunteers, who tried her lotion, reported that the ointment worked as well as, or even better than, expensive brands.

The University of Mindanao, led by Eric Logie Mallorca, Adelfrank Cabana, Ian Reyes and Edison Pernalete, won the Outstanding Student Creative Research award, college category, for its Line Disconnection System.

"Disconnection of power lines due to wind and tampering of electric motors and power line has always been a big problem of power distribution companies," the students say. The line disconnection system, when embedded into current grids, enables companies to disconnect and reconnect easily the electric lines of customers.

Composed by National High School students Lovely Ann and Angelica Angeny, with adviser engineer Rhoda Christine Cotanz and Debbie Tirawit, won the same award, high school category, for producing natural fiber from the leaves of the snake plant.

After doing sensory evaluation tests, the students discovered that fibers of the snake plant, which is endemic to the region, was an strong and durable as commercial ones, making it a potential money-earner for Mindanao.

"The gold mine of Davao is not only its natural resources," said Intellectual Property Office Philippines Director Ricardito Blancaflor. "What will make Davao rich are the creative minds of Davaoeños."

The face of God

Allan Reyes of Mendezbank Foundation Research frames' prizes for teachers.

Little Ana was talking to her mother about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because, even though it was a very large mammal, its throat was very small.

Then said Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Intrigued, the teacher repeated that it was impossible. Ana said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah."

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?" Ana replied, "Then you ask him."

Another time, the teacher asked Ana what she was drawing. Ana said, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, Ana replied, "They will in a minute."

During lunch, the children lined up in the cafeteria. At the head of the table was a large pile of mangoes. The teacher made a note: "Take only ONE. God is watching."

At the other end of the table was a large pile of cookies. Ana had written a note, "Take all you want. God is watching the mangoes."

E-mail the author at bcelso@yahoo.com.

Online course on renewable energy

AN ONLINE Renewable Energy Certificate program has been launched by the Ateneo.

Indal Francis University Graduate School of Business in London, Pennsylvania, and the Philippines' Central Renewable Energy Technology Center (CRETC).

The pioneering educational program aims to give students the chance to acquire a Renewable Energy Business Development Certificate online.

It is designed to provide professionals with the knowledge and real-world practical perspectives on renewable energy and alternative energy technologies. The program features on the business and policy aspects of the industry.

It helps students understand the technology and prospects there to use it effectively.

The first Filipino graduate of the program is Peter Ed A. Cayco, program director of CRETC.

The online educational series begins with "Renewable Energy Applications." It consists of two weekly two-hour online live sessions conducted by Owen Hutchinson, an internationally recognized renewable energy expert who was a consultant in the drafting of the Philippines' Renewable Energy Act of 2008 (Republic Act No. 9513).

Programs will be accessible from any location with Internet connection.

The online certificate course allows students to learn from experts on renewable energy, connect with instructors and other students and get a graduate's education while still being a United States university (Just a college or a private company) without leaving the country.

Visit www.renewableenergyonline.com/ ateneo, www.ie.edu/pbpe/engpbe.html, E-mail admissions@renewableenergyonline.com or call 6395557, 09173628646.

Press release guidelines

STORIES submitted for publication and sent as attachment to e-mail should be in a simple text or MS Word format.

Photographs should each be sent separately as .jpg files. All photographs must have corresponding captions.

You may also send a compact disc containing the press release and photos.

Please do not send pod text sheets; releases should be ready for editing and printing.

The press release should have the date when it was written or sent. Senders should include their contact numbers and e-mail address.

Storytelling workshop and caravan visit Digos

THE POPULAR Foundation brought its storytelling workshop and storytelling caravan, "180 Years of Jose Rizal, 100 Beloved Filipino Children's Stories," to Digos City, Davao del Sur.

The visit was also meant to highlight the exemplary performance of the city's public schools in the National Achievement Test (NAT) for 2009-2010.

Imalay Foundation conducted the activities with Filipino publisher Adarna House to promote the reading of Filipino storybooks among schoolchildren.

The Department of Education (DepEd) region XI and DepEd Digos City officer supported the activities.

A total of 15 elementary and secondary education participated in the free storytelling workshop, the first of its kind in Mindanao.

STORYTELLER and workshop facilitator Jay Mirasol (seated, center) visits DepEd's Sulfa Bernardino-Oliver (seated, third from left), education program supervisor for English, elementary level, and Dhelia C. Quimerating (seated, fifth from left), education program supervisor for English, secondary level, with Digos City teachers.

Educators were taught useful techniques to make storytelling more interactive and how they could inspire students to discover literature on their own.

The storytelling caravan visited seven schools in Digos that were among the top performers in the 2009-2010 NAT: Mount Sinai Elementary School, Balabag Elementary School, Balabag Elementary School, Ramon Magsaysay Central Elementary School, Igpit Elementary School, San Miguel Elementary School, Digos Central School and San Mariano Marcos Elementary School.

Imalay chose a hundred children's stories from local publishers. Some of the titles were "Ang Pasil-Buhing Bibok ni Pastpat" (Adarna), "Binukowang Dagatan" (Visprint), "Si Carmen Lahat sa Kulit" (Golden Kalatas), "Ang Matinong ang Siyahin" (Anvil), and "The Brother's Wu and the Good Luck Jar" (Tahanan).

More than 2,500 Digos students have enjoyed the storytelling sessions.

Imalay's storybook "Christmas in February" (Adarna) was also read. Written by May Tobias-Papa, the book teaches the basics of financial literacy.

Imalay gave away savings notebooks so the children could practice what they learned from the story on keeping track of their savings and expenses.

The Imalay Storytelling Workshop series ran for 18 days. It has benefited educators, volunteers and students from public schools and nongovernment organizations. The caravan is only on its second year. Last year, it was held in 24 different schools in Batangas, Bataan, Cavite and Iloilo.

Playgrounds for the MIND

E-mail: [redacted]@inquirer.com.ph
Copy Editor Chayrie Medina

Member Schools

UST hosts global chemistry experiment in select schools

UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas through its Department of Chemistry hosted 10 student participants from 10 high schools in Metro Manila in their interactive activities on water as part of the Global Chemistry Experiment carried out as part of the celebration of the International Year of Chemistry. This activity was organized through a grant from the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines.

The experiments focused on the theme "Water: A Chemical Solution" and aimed to highlight the importance of water as a universal solvent and its vital role in society and the environment. The students gathered data on water samples from Pasig River and a beach in Cavite, and entered the results in the Global Experiment Database. Their collected data have been compared with those obtained by school children from different parts of the world.

The interactive activities included (1) the pH of the planet; (2) salty waters, (3) water purification, and (4) solute dissolution. The experiments were developed by a taskforce organized by the UNESCO, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, and the Royal Society of Chemistry in the United Kingdom.

A similar activity was held simultaneously in three other universities in Metro Manila involving a total of 130 high school students. The participating schools were Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University and University of the Philippines-Diliman.

Nine universities in different parts of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao have also hosted a total of 490 students from high schools in their region. In Luzon, the global experiments were coordinated by the University of the Philippines Los Baños and Bicol University.

The activities in the Visayas regions were organized by the University of San Carlos, University of San Agustin, Visayas State University, and Silliman University. The experiments in the Mindanao regions were conducted in MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Ateneo de Davao University and Notre Dame of Marbel University.

CCP hosts oratorical contest, quiz bee

CENTRAL College of the Philippines, through the initiative of its College of Arts and Sciences, recently hosted an interscholastic oratorical contest and quiz bee among senior high school students from various public and private schools.

Franchesca Clarence Denise Rosero of St. Paul's College Pasig City won the oratorical contest with the theme "Iron Rifal and the South Sea today, Today and Tomorrow," while Louise Antonet Hosia from Pasay Cathedral School topped the general information quiz bee.

According to Rezenda de Gracia, PhD, CCP dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Education, the event was conducted "to provide avenues for developing the talents and skills of high school students in order their awareness of social issues." The program was chaired by professor Anna T. Monoy, with professors Maricris Camayan as co-chair.

Teams that took part in the competition came from the Central Colleges of the Philippines, Judge Juan Luna High School, Lourdes School of Mandaluyong, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School, Pasay Catholic School, Ramon Magsaysay Cubao High School, St. Paul's College-Pasig City, Cardus Albert High School, and City of Mandaluyong Science High School.

CCP president Crispino P. Reyes affirmed the policy of CCP to encourage the participation of students in academic competitions "that stimulate them to strive for excellence and achievement. This helps strengthen their career orientation and develop the desire to aim for lofty goals in life."

PWU OBSERVES WORLD CULTURE MONTH

Philippine Women's University observed the World Culture Month with a program on the theme "A Cultural Trip Around the World" presented by the school's international students. The program was formally opened by PWU board chairperson Dr. Helena Z Benitez (center), assisted by president Dr. Francisco Benitez (seated left) and director Kiyoshi Takeuchi from the Japanese Embassy. Others who attended were Dr. Elsa Mallgalig, Dr. Teruko Haga of the PWU Alumni Association, and director Erlinda Chiaramonte. Participating international students rendered song and dance numbers, showed country videos, exhibited origami or the art of paper folding, and demonstrated yukata, the art of wearing the Japanese kimono.

CEU conducts provincial college entrance exams

CENTRO Escolar University will once again conduct provincial college entrance examinations as strategic locations in different provinces to make the CEU College Entrance Examinations (CEE) more accessible to other senior high school students outside Metro Manila. This would save time, money and energy for those interested, instead of traveling all the way to Manila, they can easily take the entrance examinations in a school near their area.

The out-of-town examinations are as follows: College of the Immaculate Conception-Cabanatuan City Nueva Ecija (Jan. 14, 2012), Holy Rosary Parochial Institute-Orani, Bataan (Feb. 4, 2012), and Our Lady of Guyanay Academy-Tad City, Batangas (Feb. 11, 2012).

The CEU CEE is also on going in its Manila and Makati campuses, Mondays to Saturdays at 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. The schedule for the Makati campuses is on Sundays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 8 a.m.

For inquiries, contact CEU Manila at 735-6891 loc. 253/329, 735-6965, and 736-0672; or e-mail your inquiries at admissions@ceu.edu.ph. For CEU Makati at G/F Peyrat, call 889-8189; Legaspi Village, call 893-3481 and 893-2484; and CEU Malolos, call (044) 791-6368.

UC, PMA bring books to Kalinga schools

A CONVOY of five buses and four support vehicles bearing books and personnel entered from Baguio City in Tabuk in the province of Kalinga on Nov. 5 to donate 8,779 volumes of books to 54 public and private schools of the Kalinga provincial schools division.

The activity was spearheaded by the University of the Cordilleras (UC) Community Extension and Services Office (UCESO) in cooperation with the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), through a team drawn from the non-government organization, Children's International Philippines Inc. (CIPI).

Volunteers composed of UC students, personnel, faculty and members as well as PMA cadets, officers and non-commissioned officers, troops and graduating cadets made the 11-hour trip to Balbalan Central School (BCS) in Tabuk, the designated staging area for UC's "Mobile Library and Reading" program and book donations as well as venue for a mathematics coaching and youth leadership seminars.

On hand during the book donation were the twin-UC vice presidents for administration and CESO director Dr. Leonardo S. Apostolado, and academy superintendent Maj. Gen. Rosauro R. Avelo T. Peralta.

"This is the first time in my four years in Kalinga that our schools here had a book donation of this scale," Kalinga schools superintendent Dr. Norma Dellamento said. The activity which coincided with the Philippines' celebrations of National Reading Month, "will help improve the quality of basic education in Kalinga-learning pupils and teachers materials to help them build their skills in reading," Dellamento said.

UC and PMA volunteers sort and classify books for distribution to 54 public and private elementary and secondary schools in the Kalinga schools division. A total of 8,779 volumes of assorted books from the Children's International Philippines Inc. (CIPI) were brought to Buscao Central School in Tabuk last Nov. 5 through a convoy of PMA buses.

In marking National Reading Month, the Department of Education (DepEd) gave emphasis on the problem of "functional reading" among grade school pupils who can read but lack reading comprehension skills for a truly productive reading experience. Aside from reference books, the package of learning materials brought by UC and CIPI included recollection for reading activity sessions with grade school pupils.

Tuesday and students from different public and private elementary and secondary schools from Kalinga converged at the BCS to receive their respective share of books. UC and PMA volunteers sorted and labelled the books according to destinations, some as far as the regional extension campus of Lubuagan, Pinukpuk and Tinglayan.

UC CESO technical assistant Lauren Dulnuan said, PMA Civic Military Operations chief Lt. Col. Ferdinand Dulay Jr. "laid the groundwork for the activity and communicated with the Tabuk provincial, municipal, city and school officials prior to embarkation."

The UC Office of Student Affairs and Services (OSAS) manned by Dean Arsenio C. Maguda and staff Gladys S. Badua facilitated the registration of student volunteers from the different UC colleges as well as non-teaching personnel, the "Bugoy" class of 2012, UC stalwart Jessman Cheryl N. Baldan and staff Josie Otto ensured that the books were sorted, classified and labeled for uniform distribution. BC school physician Dr. Angelina Joy Hamada and her staff of nurses, along with the Dinh Simon Hospital personnel, provided medical services for the journey.

UNIVERSITY of Makati executive vice president and concurrent Faculty president Dr. Ethel Chan (left center) receives a plaque of appreciation from TESDA Executive Director Joel Villanueva. Also in MTPLC's delegation were Engr. Apollo Marcelino and council secretary Prof. Rosalina Ferrer both ex-Makati officials entrusted to keep progress for the year 2011 envisioned way current MTPLC secretariat at the university.

TESDA recognition for UMak-MTPLC

THE MAKATI Training and Livelihood Councils (MTPLC) comprised of the University of Makati and the Makati City government and non-government organizations was awarded a certificate of recognition by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for its commitment and support to TESDA-based short-term training programs for the city's out-of-school youth, housewives and senior citizens.

The training programs were customized to the livelihood and economic opportunity needs of the target beneficiaries that included courses in automotive, electronics, refrigeration, motorcycle and computer hardware servicing, arts & crafts, welding and fabrication, electrical building wiring, dressmaking and beauty services.

Some 3600 Makati residents participated/benefited in 2011.

UL, Thailand's Maejo University establish ties

UNIVERSITY of the Luzs and Maejo University (MJU) of Chiang Mai in the Kingdom of Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Nov. 11 and 12 officially establishing academic and cooperation between the two universities in the areas of exchange of faculty, staff, students and cultural performers, joint research and publications, joint conferences and seminars, short conferences, exchange of academic materials and other information, and special short-term academic programs.

The MOU was signed by UL president Dr. Nora A. Ocampo and MJU president Dr. Damrong Wong.

As an initial offshoot of the partnership, nine Loyolans and Feust and Renaissance Manager graduate of UNIVERSITE College of Arts and Sciences-Caloocan left the country last Nov. 3 for an on-the-job training and immersion in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The students will be staying in Thailand for 45 days. Another group of students is slated to leave in the summer of 2012.

UL president Rolor Garcia and Maejo University president Chamnian Wong (second, second and third, respectively), sign a memorandum of understanding establishing relations and cooperation between the two academic institutions. With the two university presidents are UE Caloocan chancellor Zenaida Ramos (second left) and Maejo University vice president for special affairs Ankorn Kanjanapadon (second right), standing from left are UE's officials: College of Business Administration-Caloocan dean Rogelio Pagkaliwan, Office of Research Coordination director Olivia Cardi, Graduate School dean Avelina De La Rea, College of Fine Arts dean Celso Santiago, and College of Engineering-Caloocan dean Victor Macam Jr.

UNIVERSITY of Makati executive vice president and concurrent Faculty president Dr. Ethel Chan (left center) receives a plaque of appreciation from TESDA Executive Director Joel Villanueva. Also in MTPLC's delegation were Engr. Apollo Marcelino and council secretary Prof. Rosalina Ferrer both ex-Makati officials entrusted to keep progress for the year 2011 envisioned way current MTPLC secretariat at the university.

SPORTS

Claret HATAW brings home the glory

CHRISTMAS came early for Claret's HATAW and successfully proved its elite status in two back-to-back prestigious dance competitions held in November. The dance troupe took first place in the Starchers Street-dance Battle 7 at the Ayala Triangle Gardens on Nov. 12, a week later, on Nov. 20, it won the championship in Major Impact: Maximum Security at Ateneo's Intercity Luau Invasion Showdown 2011 at the Ateneo Gymnasium, which is dubbed as "the ultimate intercollegiate dance showcase" among college-based groups, opened its competition for the first time to high school-based groups and other dance groups. The Starchers Street-dance Battle also on its 7th year and known as the country's biggest streetdance competition, was participated in by almost a hundred dance crews from high schools and colleges nationwide in an all-out showdown for streetdance supremacy. Claret's HATAW won the High School Category of Starchers Streetdance Battle for 2009, and has since remained in the competition's top 3 rankings of the best streetdance outfits in the country. In the first year of Maximum Security's high school competition, HATAW beat out eight other dance teams for the championship. HATAW was founded in 2006 and is managed by Claret alumnus Jon Andrew Feria. Current members include Pat Andrew Pineda (president), John Kevin Soriano (internal vice president), and John Daniel Abilay (external vice president). The 18 members of the team attributes part of their success to the rigorous daily training under the supervision of their coach, Maria Theresa Angelica S. Jacinto who is a member of the dance groups UP Street and The Crew, a coach of the A-Team, and an alumna of the University of the Philippines. Anta has been with the team for the past six years. Training includes keeping members in shape, improving their strength and speed, and perfecting their stunts and routines. Now in its 6th year, HATAW has acquired several new achievements and honors for Claret School.

KEYSHORE KIAN, a 5th grader at Woodlands International School, won gold in the Kumite Fighting category in the 1st PNP Luzon-Visayas-Mindanao Karate-Do Championship held last Nov. 26 to 27 at Marquee Mall, Angeles City.

Quill Award for Ateneo law book

ATENEO Law School and Mediamate Communications/Manz Books received the prestigious Philippine Quill award of excellence for its outstanding coffee table book entry, "Ateneo Hogar ng Juristas: 75 Years of the Ateneo Law School."

The awarding ceremonies were held at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila last Nov. 25. Those who received the award were outgoing dean Cesar S. Villanueva as co-publisher, ALS acting dean Sedfrey Candelaria as project manager, Manila Wine Communications/Mediamate executive publisher Raymundo Cruz, writer Atty. Anneliese Santos, and copy editor Arnold Tolentino.

An open question of university Ateneo Law School has a tradition of raising the bar in legal education in the Philippines. The men and women behind the endeavors that brought honor to the school, the legal profession, and the country are captured in the table book. Through hundreds of images and elegantly-written stories, the book narrates the genesis of a legacy by the history of man.

The book is available at Ateneo Law School's Lim Seno Law Library and The Ateneo University Press. It is also available at Public Bookstore branches in Rockwell, Shangri-La Plaza, Greenhills 1 and Greenhills.

For more information about "Ateneo, Hogar ng Juristas," visit http://law.ateneo.edu or contact Lolly Lim (899-7697 or lpsim@law.ateneo.edu), Mediamate Communications/Manz Books (formerly Communications and PR Office, Ateneo de Manila (426-6001 local 4000 or (0918) 916 3164).

HONOR ROLL

ADNU students excel in animation tilts

ATTY. Pantaleon Alvarez was not just boasting when he said during his inaugural speech last July 1 that "the best place to learn computer animation in the Philippines is in the Ateneo de Naga."

Ateneo animators swept the major awards in two national animation competitions held Nov. 22 to 25 in Quezon City and Pasay City. The big winner is the Ateneo de Naga University (ADNU).

Alemedo Pallanan and Ronald Rubiajanta Jr. to the recently concluded 18th Animac Digital Art and Animation Festival (ADAF 2011) held at the Ayala Convention Hall. "Sampayan" and "Paano Huhihe" also won the first and the runner-up prizes respectively in the 3D animation category. Other Ateneo winners in Animahenasyon 2011 were Maryjoan Bayona for Best Animated Music Video ("Bisaya") and Anthony Lamuan Isaac for Best Animated TV Commercial for his advocacy ad about saving the animal habitat. While a group of 3M showcased its technology inputs and participation in Earthmed City, another group of Ateneo animators were also reaping awards during the closing ceremonies of the 23rd Gawad CCP para sa Mga Natitiging Pelikula at Video at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Dulang Ateneo Estudyante. Reinvented of Ateneo de Naga's one-two finish in 2008 and 2010 in the animation category of the longest-running independent film festival in Asia, "Paano Kaibin" won the top award (followed by "Sampayan" in second place. "Paano Huhihe" was also awarded Best Work by Female Directors. Two other 3D animation short films and a 4-day animation film won honorable mention awards for the Ateneo animators. "Ay Balatin" created by Daryl Layson, Jerrold King Cadiz, and Pinene Angelie Dator; "Hiway" by Edwine Ann Manzano; Jessa Leah Patricia Tangco, Daryl Layson and Gil Joseph Sanchez; and "Kalaro" by Ernie Paul with Benjamin Sucsoc, Mari Ericson Hidalgo and Raymund Marcian Antonio Marquez is the flagship project of the Animation Council of the Philippines, Inc. It serves as a venue for filipino animators to present their world-class ideas, and open doors of opportunities for them to meet with and be inspired by the finest names in the industry. Gawad CCP Para sa Mahusayna Pelikula at Video, on the other hand, is sponsored by the Film Division of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and seeks to promote Filipino independent filmmaking by giving recognition to the year's most outstanding film and video artists.

UE 2011 personnel awardees feted

UNIVERSITY of the East (UE) honored its 2011 top personnel who served the university with utter dedication and loyalty for 25, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years service from months in lifting recognition and appreciation ceremony at the UE Conference Hall. Chosen model employees this year were Sheilla R. Fernandez, Model Teacher, College of Dentistry; Anne M. Ignacio, Model Management Employee, Office of Extension and Community Outreach; and Ancelo E. Manalo, Model Rank-and-File, (College of Business Administration-Manila). UE also gave performance incentive awards to faculty members who were cited for their exemplary performance. Seated, from left: UE Manila College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) dean Josefina M. Evangelista, UE Caloocan CAS dean Julie E. Alvarez, UE Manila chancellor Linda P. Santiago, president Edar A. Garcia, UE Manila vice chair and UE trustee Wilson T. Young, UE executive vice president Carmelita E. Mateo, 85th UE Foundation Anniversary Steering Committee chair and UE Marketing Dept. executive director Jesus T. Sanchez Jr. UE Manila College of Business Administration (CBA) dean Teresita S. Tibalete and UE Caloocan CBA dean Angelito V. Pagtalunan, standing, from left: Office of Administration director Marciano L. Inciong, UE College of Fine Arts dean Celso B. Santiago, model management employee Arsenio Apostol, model rank-and-file employee Armando Manilla, and model teacher Sheilla Fernandez. UE Caloocan College of Engineering (CoE) dean Victor R. Macam Jr. and UE Manila CoE dean Constantino S. Pagtalan.

UE wins preservice teachers' competition

OFFICIALS representing Far Eastern University's Institute of Education to the 1st National Preservice Teachers Convention held at Teacher's Camp, Baguio City, hosted 200 student teachers from various Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) across the country. The following FEU delegates received recognition: Algenon Castañeda (BSEd Math), second place in Teaching Demonstrative Mathematics; Daisy Infante (BSEd English) for Rank 1 in Teaching Demonstration in English; Ma. Angely Yabut (BSEd English) for Rank 5 in Research Forum; Camille Andrea Abad (BSEd SPED), 7th place in the Professional Education Quiz Bee; and Ms. Lory Heraldo (BSEd MAPE), finalist in Extemporaneous Speech. The delegates were accompanied and coached by taskforce of undergraduate students Harold John Cotiatis Dalisay on Nov. 30-Dec 2011. The theme of the convention was "Preservice Teacher Education: Discovering Opportunities from the Challenges of Global Standards through Excellence, Collaboration and Commitment." Spearheaded by the National Center for Teacher Education of the Philippine Normal University, the four-day gathering provided preservice teachers the opportunity to showcase their knowledge and skills in teaching and learning different content areas.

Alchemia IV winners get Letran scholarships

STUDENTS from Dinang Ilaw Silver College beat 39 other schools to emerge as champions of Alchemia IV, the annual Mathematics and Science competition organized by Colegio de San Juan de Letran for high school seniors, held on Nov. 24. San Beda College-Alabang and Makati Science High School were second and third placers, respectively. Aside from trophies, the winning teams won Letran scholarships. Dinang Ilaw Silver College won full scholarships and P15,000 for Sofia Mella Collega (Alchemia's top star for 1 (90 percent) scholarships and P7,500; and Makati Science High School also received partial (80 percent) scholarships and P5,000. All scholarships will be continued for the following semesters as long as the students comply with the set conditions. "Within the theme "Geography for revival: gracias en las ciencia y matematicas) Sensearing new glories in science and mathematics)," the annual competition sought to uphold the College's commitment of providing academic excellence, provide a venue for a friendly exchange of competence, and to promote camaraderie among the high school students of both public and private secondary schools in Metro Manila and nearby provinces. Alchemia is one of the highlights of Letran's 39th founding anniversary dubbed as "Celebrasiyon 39!" Celebrating for no honor nemas glimas."

Southville honors outstanding alumna

SOUTHVILLE Foreign University (SFU) congratulated Geraldine R. Roxas for winning the Ms. World 2011 First Princess crown. SFU is the country's institution offering transnational education in the Philippines, and is a member of the Southville Global Education Network (SGEN), a consortium of seven world-class schools offering programs from preschool to graduate school. Roxas was a graduate of Marketing Management from Sunderland University, one of SFU's prestigious partners in the United Kingdom. From left: Roxas with SFU's head of academic support Albert Tijam, marketing director Joyce Gutuba, chair Roger Santiagomas, and School of Business and Computing dean Dr. Alfred Marvin when Roxas was a student.

Teachers make the best partners

THE SEAL Beach-SE Social Reading Program partnered with 30 teachers who had more than 2,000 students in their English classes. Of course, there were other students, not to mention homeschoolers, who took up the notice "Have fillers and the Where Kings" with their students although they did not sign up with the humanoids for the program. That was easy to do, all they needed was a copy of the paper every Monday to make the story available to their students.

Eight of the SE partner teachers taught fourth, grade-11 bundled 10th grade, nine taught sixth grade and the rest, a mix of grades. Half of the teachers had held a whole range of interdisciplinary and enrolled the troubleset with their size, average and lowest section.

The rest used it for a homogenous group, either the average section or the slow readers. Only one used it for the gifted section exclusively.

Most of the teachers took more than one day to teach each chapter. All had to translate the material into Filipino. All teachers clipped the story for future use.

Here's what the teachers had to say about the program:

- I had complete attendance on Mondays because of the newspaper. The students were excited about the story and the activities.
- The students loved the story. They waited until classroom for the newspaper every Monday to read the next chapter. I, too, enjoyed the story.
- Everything in the program was very useful for us teachers, especially the student activity guide.
- This has been established as part of Stella D. Reyes El. Reading Recovery Program, which I initiated in 2007, along with the Read Along Session...

PARTNER teachers at the swim debriefing. Second student to write Lyca Mandagio to her with a smile Joseph Bravo. To her right is Bacolli's Reyne Tiap. Be Idrin Blue Marquez. Wayne Isach is the Learning editor.

THE TEACHERS' Workshop on Using the Infolit in the Classroom, a requirement of the program, always took in a group photo.

I hope more Olongapo City schools would become a part of the Social Reading Program by Bacolli and PDI.

- The newspaper is a very good source of additional knowledge for the students.
- My students really enjoyed the story. Their imagination made the stories more interesting. ... It was most helpful in that my students learned about family values and the realities of life.
- What was most helpful was connecting the story to real life, like clipping news and photos on the effects of climate change on real lives.
- Making story boards were most helpful to my students.
- I liked the part where the students were asked to clip stories and pictures from the newspaper for the Hall of Fame and the Wall of Shame.
- The students looked forward to the story every week. They showed enthusiasm in doing the activities. The activity guide was helpful because it had a variation, from comprehension check to focus of the newspaper.
- The student activity guide for students was helpful. Every child enjoyed doing the activities, artwork, worksheets, organizers, as well as role playing about the story. Everything in the program was useful. It was educational. It touched the head, heart, hands and home.
- What was most helpful was the integration of the story to relevant news and the suggested activities that encouraged critical thinking skills.
- The story got my students interested in reading...that was what was most helpful to me as a teacher.
- Everything enhanced and promoted cooperative learning among our pupils.
- Thank you for helping us open the minds of our students.

Pampanga's Imelda Perez said it was assigned to another school. "I would still encourage all my teachers to join the SE Social Reading Program."

Letter from Laguna

I REMEMBER clearly the very first time my pupils held the newspaper in their hands.

Just like me who implored their new homes, they explored the Philippine Daily Inquirer. It was a big exciting moment for them, but they learned to deal with it and were never looking forward for more.

Through your program, they learned so much about family friendship and values.

This rare and great opportunity was not easy, but it ended with a smile, as his smiled one morning. I am hoping their my pupils gave you reasons to smile with their library recipes.

Ms. Cruz, continue inspiring and touching children's lives through your stories.

May God shower you with more blessings.

Amy Fe T. Abrahin
English teacher
Subsibol Elementary School
San Ortiz, Laguna

Training a five-star cast for tourism

From page B

to be among the best in providing professionally trained personnel.

A private college established in Canada in 1980 to provide diploma and certificates in the hospitality, tourism, aviation and adventure programs, CTC was hesitant to come to the Philippines, according to Lim. But as the second formal launch of CTSI, the two women presidents of the CTC campuses in Vancouver and Surrey were both present. Gwen Donaldson and Ron Berard (Lim) honored Lim's boss. Senior Lim does not take no for an answer. More all, he is the main man who brought the CTC Award Certified Franchise Executive program into the country.

CTSI has a continuous enrollment scheme. That means you don't have to wait for the start of the semesters to get your training. In fact, they have modules classes going on every month.

Throughout the year, CTSI offers job-specific modules on coffee appreciation, coffee brewing, cocktail mixing and advanced wait-staff training. In two offices, for example, you can learn how to make latte concoctions that look too good to sip. If you're interested in landing bar, check out CTSI's training on mixing drinks. Big restaurants love bar-tenders with their waiting staff at CTSI for advanced professional training.

Very focused and specialized diploma, certificate or advanced professional courses begin in June. CTSI certificate courses are in hotel sales and marketing, front office operations, food and beverage services, bar operations, hotels operations, professional housekeeping and administration hotels. It also has courses for those interested to be cabin-cabinets service representatives, flight attendants or travel agents. These courses are packaged with internships at leading hotels, restaurant chains, cruiseships facilities and the like.

If you prefer a diploma, you can take up hospitality and resort management, travel and tourism management, hospitality and tourism management or hospitality cruise management. CTSI also offers advanced professional courses in hotel sales and marketing, hotel management and restaurant management.

That done is the advanced One-year road-to-job preparation (three weeks for people who are already experienced workers but want to better their skills to qualify for employment in international hotels chains or fine dining restaurants.

"We have courses in management, cruise ship and airline courses. We even have adventure tourism," says Lim. "We even have a one-day course in the kitchen. We don't do culinary."

What he eventually wants to do is partner with leading universities for the general education courses so their graduates can get cabin-crew jobs. But, not just as a job. Just for now, he says, many Filipinos cannot afford to pursue an education to be an extended period of time. "They cannot afford to stay, let alone training that will lead to a job, and that's what we offer."

His other plans include franchising out the expertise of CTSI to other Asian countries destinations. Already, he says, there are inquiries from Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

CTSI is on the second floor of Pampico Plaza. Telephone numbers are 884-8004 and 884-7343. Visit www.ctsi.com.ph or www.ctsi.com.ph/subic-bay.com.

CTSI is fully equipped with demo areas, laboratories and mock ups that conform to standards and specifications of the industry's best workplaces.

Don Bosco graduates to train ...

From page B

improve the plight of individuals in particular and society in general.

He added that Bosco's long-time goal was to give back to the community by, among others, inspiring poor but deserving students, especially of the youth, and giving them the chance to excel and improve their lives.

DBTC vice president for planning and development Jun Bernard said the program had been successful so far. They were certain, he said, that more people would be benefited by the partners' long-term commitment to the initiative.

Samsung has supported Don Bosco's various projects, including improvement of the curriculum of the Don Bosco Training Centers, aligning it with industry requirements; improving trainers' competencies by providing knowledge that was relevant, accessible and of high quality.

Through the joint venture, Samsung and Don Bosco hope to develop highly skilled graduates who can compete in the labor market and qualify for employment while preparing them to become responsible citizens of the society.

Since 1971, some 80,000 out-of-school youths have benefited from the programs of the different Don Bosco Training Centers and street children centers.

To be, statistics show that some 51,361 graduates or 1,602 out-of-school youths per year have been given the opportunity to be employed.

The Samsung and Don Bosco 15-month TVET program includes 10 months of classroom and hands-on training and five months industry-on-the-job training where trainees undergo values formation, and develop technical expertise.

The training curriculum includes Samsung technology with the company providing product support and helping set up a laboratory inside the DBTC.

The Don Bosco partnership follows Samsung's recent tie-up with La Salle Green Hills for the school's eWorkbook Personal Learning Device (PLaD) project, a pioneering program designed to make the "digital word" the new textbook in the classroom.

A mysterious 'yaya' ...

From page B

Oliver N. Quilla, Marcelino G. Bundo, Delia T. Balagtas, Evangeline B. Santa, Jhon, Lorenzo Singson, Rodolfo T. Tolled and Merry A. Villarete.

The Social Reading Program is not to be confused with the popular and much-awarded Read Along corporate advocacy of the Bacolli.

Read Along is aimed at bolstering love of reading among the young. The SE Social Reading Program, on the other hand, uses story coverage newspapers reading and the use of newspapers in classrooms as a learning tool.

In other words, Read Along is reading for enjoyment while Social Reading is reading the newspaper for learning.

Deadline for submission of student research extended

THE DEADLINE for submission of papers for the 2012 Kapatirán Asia Pacific Middle East and Africa Conference for Young Professionals has been extended to Jan. 9.

Kapatirán Ltd., developer of secure content and threat management solutions, said submissions on Internet security and cyber crime would be accepted from undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate students.

Authors of selected papers will present his/her work at the conference on March 21-23 at the City University of Hong Kong.

Theme of the conference is "IT Security for the Next Generation." Participants will present and discuss issues relating to cyber crime.

Registration is ongoing and participants may join in leaderboards or as a group.

Winners in the conference will receive cash prizes and will attend the final stage of the conference in May in Europe.

Papers should not exceed 8,000 words and should be accompanied by 150-200-word abstracts.

E-mail: student@kapatirán.com or log on to www.kapatirán.com/where/closed-events/it_security_conference_2012_asia

WINDY Aquino (above), Kobeyanen (right, top), and Rebekah (right, below) | Elementary School

A mysterious 'yaya' and her lovable wards

By Chelo Band-Feranez

FOR THIS year's reading series for schools, Inquirer in Education (IIE) asked two young authors to send their magic on a story for young readers.

"Yaya Maya and the White Ring" is a fantasy story by Cyan Abad-Jugo, author to twins Mayan and Colin, both almost 7 years old, and a teacher of English literature at Ateneo de Manila University.

As a kid, Abad-Jugo loved to listen to her dad, poet Gemino Abad, make up stories about giants and goblins, and it's no wonder that her twins now prefer the same genre. "My husband Mike likes fantasy stories, too," says Abad-Jugo, a Palanca award winner in the stories for children category. For her story "Behind the Old Aguador," Her published titles are "Bread Summer and Other Stories" and "Lead and Shadow: Stories about Some Friendly Creatures," a fantasy book for young adults.

The illustrations for the series were by Ateneo artist Steph Rivera, whose comic strip "Full House" appears every Sunday in the Inquirer Lifestyle pullout. The strip is loosely based on real life stories with husband Dom Imbalio and two kids, 7. The artist gave birth recently to baby girl Katherine.

"Yaya Maya and the White Ring" was the fifth in the IE Social Reading Program supported by Inquirer columnist Beverly Horsburgh and the No. 1 Pinoy-among-young-Pinoys e-survey conducted by TXT Text Research Unlimited Cavalier Kintanar). Beverly has added education to its list of advocacies through this program. That done to foster love of reading among the youth and encourage the use of newspapers in classrooms to link learning to the real world.

Both the author and the artist graced the recent radio casual closing ceremonies for the series. Beach was graciously represented by Inquirer Lite Yap. All three proudly posed with the teachers for souvenir photos. (For story on Page D-2)

The rule chapter "Yaya Maya" is about a girl who meets a mysterious woman and other mysterious encounters upon relocating to a rural town with her father and younger brother. The father has requested a woman named Mayang to watch the kids while he was at work. But Mayang turns out to be not your average nanny. She is not Nanny McPhee, strange but rather mystical. And as the story unfolds, the truth is the backyard turn out to be an ordinary yard either.

Although it was a tale of realism and fantasy, the story served as a good introduction to the subjects of loss of a loved one and moving to a new place. It had curriculum links to language arts, social studies, science and values education, among others.

"Yaya Maya" was the first story for young readers from a Filipino writer to be published in the Learning section for grade school students. In previous years, the stories published were works donated by American writers and illustrators via the World Association of Newspapers. For high school students, Inquirer has had the pleasure of presenting "The Magic Circle" by Gilda Cordero-Fernando, with illustrations by Inquirer editorial artist Gilbert Dasig.

This year, as in the previous school years, Beach donated copies of the Inquirer every Monday for six weeks to give classes at 10 public schools and one nonprofit school the opportunity to read the story and study it under their Language Arts teachers.

The participating schools in Metro Manila were Tahoy in Don Bosco in Alabang; Jose Rizal Elementary School, Bernardo J. Tobar Elementary School and Tibagan Elementary School in Makati City; Rizal Avenue Elementary School in Malabon City; Ecological Walk Quezon Integrated School and Irene Lopez Integrated School in Mandaluyong City; and Ruby Ave. Elementary School in the city of San Juan.

The provincial schools that benefited from the Beach support were Bahrain Elementary School and Dagang Elementary School in Santa Cruz, Laguna; Colegio Calbog Elementary School and Catmon Elementary School in Bulacan; Rizal on Nellie E. Brown Elementary School and New Cabalan Elementary School in Olongapo City; and Kabalitan Elementary School in Luisiana, Rizal Province.

It was in September, on observance of International Literacy Day (Sept. 8), that Inquirer invited English language teachers for Grade 6 to express their interest in the Learning Program. The teachers were required to attend open-access briefing to qualify for free copies of the newspaper for their students. They were also given a workshop on using the newspaper in the classroom.

The coordinators were Rose L. Ach, Cordina Arden, Rose Ann A. Amador, Rina S. Ramos, Lanie Pasala, Marnell S. Ramos, Angelina J. Bernardo, Aimee S. Cardel, Ma.Elvi Mor, S. Carolin, Wilma B. Cuevas, Marlene Bag, Abigail Marie T. Ferraj, Marlyn Gelo, Rhea C. Gonzales, Ernal L. Guevarra, Annie C. Lopez, Michael L. Manon, Annelle T. Morales, Zenaida A. Perallos, Evelyn C. Pernantes, Sarah H. Palma, AND BRONZE

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR Cyan Abad-Jugo and Steph Rivera

NEMESIO C. Yabut Elementary School

ISAAC Lopez Integrated School

SUZETH Yap (left), who represented her sister Bea Chan, with INQUIRER marketing head Blair Maryanu and Metrobank Outstanding Teacher awardee Eva Intapas of Nellie E. Brown Elementary School, an IE partner for three years in a row

NELLIE E. Brown Elementary School

ARTWORK of students of Jose Magsaysay Elementary School

Dear Bench

Thank you for giving us the Inquirer. It is nice to know that your company wishes children to engage in reading newspapers. I hope that you continue to inspire us not only to wear good clothes, but to read the news as well. Many graces to you!

Jean Hurarayag
Kobeyanen
Elementary School
City of San Juan

I would like to thank you for the newspapers you shared with us. You really have a good heart for spending your money for us although you don't know us ... I know God will bless you more.

Linsey Flores
Colegio Calbog
Elementary School
Bulacan, Bulacan

KABALIKAN (above) and New Cabalan (right) Elementary Schools

TIBAGAN Elementary School

YOGORIO (above) and Colegio Calbog (left) Elementary Schools and Isaac Lopez Integrated School (right)